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MIRACLE MAKEOVERS

How to use paint to transform just about anything

TURN YOUR CLUTTER INTO CASH

23 WAYS TO STAY IN VACATION MODE

+ DIVORCE: A survivors' guide

AUGUST 2016

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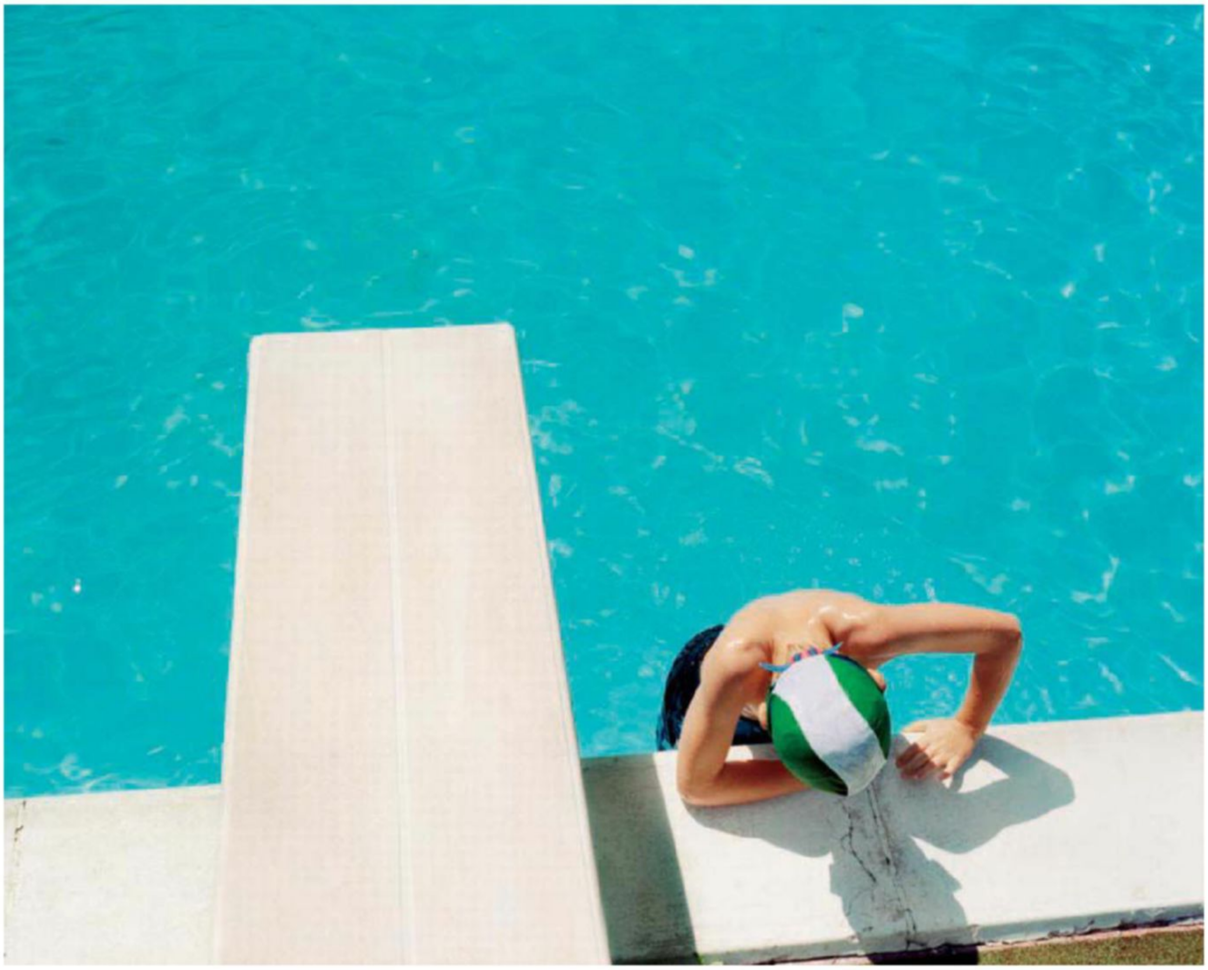
Thoughts



"Take your victories, whatever they may be, cherish them, use them, but don't settle for them."

MIA HAMM, *GO FOR THE GOAL*

Photograph by Benjamin Rasmussen

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the Simple List

YOUR MONTHLY DOSE OF USEFUL TIDBITS, TIMELY TRIVIA, AND CATCHY CONVERSATION STARTERS

132,000

The approximate speed, in miles per hour, at which the Perseid meteor shower will be zipping into Earth's atmosphere this month. The annual light show will be in effect from July 17 to August 24, with the meteors (bits of debris left in the wake of a comet or an asteroid) most visible in the Americas between 12 A.M. and dawn on August 12. Due to Jupiter's strong gravitational pull, some of the Perseids will be traveling even closer to earth this year. As a result, up to 200 meteors may be visible per hour under ideal conditions, says Bill Cooke, the lead at the NASA Meteoroid Environment Office. Even more stellar, some of the space dust you will see was ejected from the Swift-Tuttle comet in 1862! To make the most of your stargazing, get away from city lights and allow 30 to 40 minutes for your eyes to adjust to the darkness before taking in the show.

151

The number of Olympic medals awarded for art competitions between 1912 and 1948 at the summer games. Taking a page from the ancient Greek playbook, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the International Olympic Committee, insisted that sports-themed art contests take place alongside athletics. In those years, the categories varied and medals were not always awarded, but architecture, painting, sculpture, literature, and music were all official Olympic events. Although no medals will be awarded for "town planning" or "epic works" at the 2016 Rio Olympics, which run from August 5 to 21, there will be a cultural program, including a food festival and a film exhibition, in the city.

4.7

How many billions of pounds of watermelon were consumed in the United States last year, according to the National Watermelon Promotion Board. The watermelon's African roots trace back more than 4,000 years, but America has a history with it, too. In 1796, the first cookbook published in the States, *American Cookery,* included a recipe for pickled watermelon rind. When you celebrate National Watermelon Day, August 3, chew on these juicy facts: Although the appropriately named fruit is 92 percent water, it's also packed with nutrients—including about 10 milligrams of the antioxidant lycopene in a 1½-cup serving. To pick the best melon, find a firm, symmetrical one that feels heavy for its size. It should have a creamy yellow spot where the melon ripened in the sun.

91

The number of minutes that illusionist Harry Houdini spent underwater in a sealed coffin in New York's Hotel Shelton swimming pool on August 5, 1926. The weighted casket was airtight, and it had only enough oxygen for three to four minutes. Houdini aimed to best the one-hour record of magician Rahman (nailed it!), but he also saw practical applications for his stunt. Hours after his success, Houdini detailed the experience in a three-page letter to W. J. McConnell, a medical doctor in Philadelphia who did research for the U.S. Bureau of Mines. Houdini included temperature recordings (it was a balmy 80 degrees in his tomb) for McConnell, who later studied the survival techniques of trapped miners. Pretty magical, indeed.

53 to 58

The height, in inches, that a tennis ball must bounce when dropped from a height of 100 inches to be used in professional competition, according to the United States Tennis Association and the International Tennis Federation. When the 136th US Open swings into action from August 29 to September 11 in Flushing, New York, 95,000 or so Wilson tennis balls will bounce around the courts during the tournament's matches, practices, and warm-ups. That amounts to 7,000 pounds of rubber and 13,500 square feet of optic yellow felt—with 254 ball persons to chase them all down.

FOR MORE FUN FACTS AND FIGURES, follow us on Twitter (@RealSimple).

Written by Liz Loerke
Illustration by Clare Owen

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Contents

HOW TO PAINT ANYTHING: A PRIMER 148

08.2016

ON THE COVER

Miracle makeovers: How to use paint to transform just about anything
(148)

Turn your clutter into cash
(87)

23 ways to stay in vacation mode
(18)

Divorce: a survivors' guide
(158)

Cover Photograph by
David Meredith

Styling by
Heather Chontos

GENIUS BEAUTY BUYS 65

VETS' BEST PET ADVICE....................................... 75

SOAK UP SUMMER WITH EASY, FRESH SIDES................ 164

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Contents

ICE CREAM FLOAT? CHECK
Get the recipe on page 195.

THOUGHTS 2

THE SIMPLE LIST......... 4

EDITOR'S NOTE 17

Your Words

What helps you ease back into reality after a vacation? 18

the Realist

AUGUST AT A GLANCE
The lure of giant roadside attractions............. 25

NEW USES FOR OLD THINGS
Paintbrush............. 26

NOW WHAT?!?
Smart solutions for life's little disasters.... 28

DRUGSTORE CHEAT SHEET
A hairstylist picks her favorite products...... 30

REAL SIMPLIFIER
Restaurant menus..... 32

TREND TO TRY
Saddle bags 34

HOW DID WE GET HERE?
Summer blockbusters........... 36

THE STAPLE
Cornmeal 38

LITTLE HELPERS........ 40

PAGE 79

Life Lessons

GOOD READ
How becoming an empty nester made Ann Leary a worse person—for the better 43

MODERN MANNERS
Catherine Newman on declining playdates, theater-seat etiquette, careless borrowers, and more............... 49

EXPERTISE
5 ways to keep cool when it's horribly hot 55

BREATHE
Relax, fast, with this month's do-anywhere exercise... 58

the Guide

BEAUTY

PRETTY SMART 65

ROAD TEST
Facial mists............ 70

HOME

THE VETS WILL SEE YOU NOW
Your vexing pet questions, answered .. 75

LOVE (OR AT LEAST STOP HATING) THY NEIGHBOR
Helpful tips to navigate next-door annoyances.. 79

BUY IT, SELL IT
Online consignment 101 87

ASK THE ORGANIZER
Clutter conundrums, solved.................. 95

FASHION

STYLE WISE
Summer-to-fall office capsule collection 101

HEALTH

UP YOUR SAFETY GAME
10 daily behaviors to keep you healthy 114

5-MINUTE TRAINER
The squat............. 124

FAMILY

GRAB THE TISSUES
How to talk to your kids about illness 127

WORK & MONEY

THE VIEW FROM HERE
Dhivya Suryadevara, General Motors vice president, finance and treasurer, and CEO of GM Asset Management... 135

MONEYWISE
Retirement planning through the years..... 138

CAREER COACH
Off-hours work etiquette 142

Features

HOW TO PAINT (JUST ABOUT) ANYTHING
From setup to cleanup, everything you need to know before tackling your next DIY paint project 148

THE REAL STORY ABOUT DIVORCE
A bracingly honest collection of advice and experiences from women who have been there 158

EAT THIS NOW
6 summer side dishes to serve with everything....... 164

BACK TO SCHOOL? BE COOL.
Your eight-step guide to surviving the dreaded end-of-summer transition 172

PULL OVER! Why (and which) ginormous roadside attractions have been stopping drivers for years (page 25).

Food

5 EASY DINNERS 179

THINGS COOKS KNOW.. 188

ROAD TEST
Canned beer.......... 190

WHY NOT TRY...?
Pluots................. 193

BETTER BREAKFAST
Potato, Egg, and Avocado Hash 198

A LIFE IN FULL
Melinda Tsapatsaris: wife, mom, school administrator 202

CLIP AND SAVE:
***REAL SIMPLE* TO GO** ... 204

PAGE 172

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TIP
Use a clean toothbrush to remove the silk from an ear quickly and easily.

FOR MORE
Visit realsimple.com/corn to cook it perfectly every time.

MAKE THE MOST OF SUMMER

Although sunny-vacation season is beginning to slip away, we're not going to stop eating buttery, slightly charred corn on the cob. Even if you don't have a grill, visit **realsimple.com/summerguide** for our foolproof cooking method. Plus, you'll find:

- Unique, delicious toppings for your kernels (beyond butter)
- A few of our favorite side dishes to bring to a potluck or a picnic
- Genius entertaining hacks from party pros for your end-of-summer parties

ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER
@realsimple

WHAT'S ON YOUR BUCKET LIST?

As the season winds down, we want to know what you'll be doing to celebrate August.

Molly Harty
Hike 100 miles total in the Indiana State Parks to commemorate the centennial.

Nichole Beaver-Perez
Turn off my phone, leave my laptop at home, and lie on the beach for a week.

Laura Dutton
A drive-in movie—never been to one!

IDEA WORTH SAVING
Visit pinterest.com/realsimple.

S'MORES are a summer staple. If you don't have access to a campfire, make these delicious mini cookie cups. All the flavors, none of the flames. (Visit realsimple.com/smores for the recipe.)

TOP: PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID MEREDITH; FOOD STYLING BY MAGGIE RUGGIERO; SET DESIGN BY JEFFREY W. MILLER. BOTTOM: PHOTOGRAPH BY GRACE ELKUS

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Editor's Note

J**UST ABOUT ANYONE** who knows me knows that I have a real issue with bamboo. I don't mean bamboo as a plant—I know it's thought to be environmentally friendly. But let me tell you, it's not friendly to *my* environment. Oh, sure, if you have bamboo lying around, you can, as we recommended right here in this magazine, use dried stalks to string lights for a backyard party. I've done that, and it works. But you can only have so many parties. And yet even when you're not having parties, bamboo continues to grow, quickly, sinisterly, unstoppably.

I moved into my suburban house 12 years ago, and a previous owner had planted some bamboo in the backyard. Did you know that bamboo has underground rhizomes? I'm no botanist, but I think that basically means the stalks of monstrosity out my window are all One Giant Plant. Which makes it even more sinister to me. When I attempt to walk into my rhizome monstrosity forest, I feel like I am walking into the Fire Swamp in *The Princess Bride*. At any moment, I'm either going to see a flame spurt and fall into a pit of lightning sand or have to fight an R.O.U.S. (Rodent of Unusual Size).

But the biggest problem with my backyard bamboo is that, before I know it, it will be creeping into the yards around me, like a noxious gas from my personal Fire Swamp. Which makes me a very bad neighbor, and will make me an even worse neighbor in 50 years, when the bamboo has taken over our whole town, plus the southbound lanes of I-95.

And so I devoured the story "Love (or at Least Stop Hating) Thy Neighbor," on page 79 of this issue. First of all, who doesn't like to read about sticky neighbor situations? Whether you have nosy neighbors or loud neighbors or sloppy neighbors, you know you are far from alone. And don't despair, because the clever editors at *Real Simple* know how to handle them. We even provide sample scripts!

As for me, I'm thinking of drying a whole batch of bamboo and handing out the stalks to my neighbors at the holidays, each bunch tied with a big red ribbon. Perhaps such a gesture will soften the blow when, someday in the not-too-distant future, our least-favorite rhizome grows tired of my yard and begins to make its sinister way down the street.

Kristin van Ogtrop

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@KVANOGTROP

NEED HELP WITH DINNER?
Real Simple is making it easier in two ways. First, **we have a new cookbook, *Dinner Made Simple*,** which gives you 10 delicious recipes for a slew of everyday ingredients, from apples to zucchini. Second, we're partnering with FreshRealm to **deliver fully prepped ingredients for *Real Simple* dinners** right to your door! Head to the Easy Dinners section (page 179) for details on how to get $35 off your order between now and September 15.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PERRY HAGOPIAN; HAIR BY PAUL WARREN USING RENE FURTERER FOR ART DEPARTMENT; MAKEUP BY MELISSA SILVER FOR MAYBELLINE NEW YORK. BY MALENE BIRGER BLOUSE.

Your Words

Illustrations by Dan Page

Q.

What helps you ease back into reality after a vacation?

A.

Setting a vacation picture as my desktop.

Every day, when I come to work and log on to my office computer, the scenic photo takes me back to happy memories of the trip. I'll relive the vacation experience in my mind for a few moments before returning to reality. This ritual always puts me in a good mood and motivates me to plan the next vacation.

ANDRIA CHISM, Pasadena, California

My sister gave me great advice: Schedule time with friends your first week back. It makes such a difference.

ALICIA ABERNETHY WARD, Denton, Texas

Coming home to a clean house.

Before I go on vacation, I put clean sheets on the bed, hang fresh bathroom towels, and get rid of any clutter. That way, when I get back, whether it's from a long weekend or a two-week trip, the house is in order and I don't feel so overwhelmed.

AMY BAUER, Rochester, New York

TIDYING UP THE HOUSE? GET SOME HELPFUL EXPERT TIPS ON PAGE 95.

A premade home-cooked meal.

Before I go away, I prepare lasagna or some sort of chicken casserole and freeze it. I then ask my pet sitter to put it in the refrigerator the day before we return to give it enough time to thaw. Back at home, I pop it in the oven and—with zero effort—have a meal for my family.

AMY WAGONER, Newburgh, Indiana

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I always make sure my vacation ends on a Friday so my husband and I have the whole weekend to catch up on sleep and chores before going back to work. It's amazing the difference those two days make!
ASHLEY McCORMICK, Mount Dora, Florida

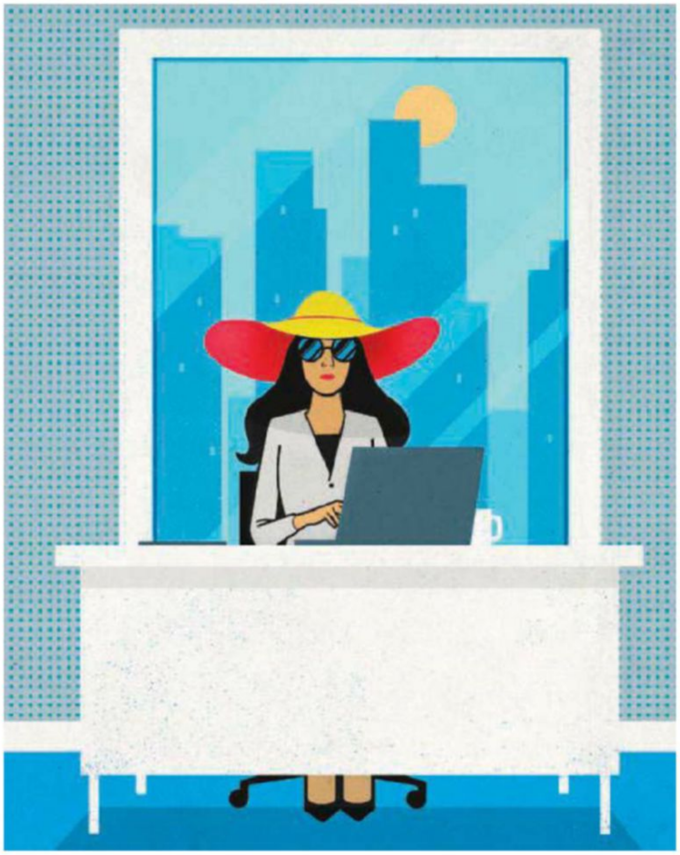
An extra day off.
Having time to unpack, do laundry, and grocery-shop really decreases my stress level for the rest of the week. With all of that done, I can jump into the piles of work waiting for me without worrying about all the chores I have to do after my first day back on the clock.
CATHERINE COONEY, Marion, Ohio

I always schedule vacations at the end of a work project. That way, I can make sure all loose ends are tied up before I leave so I can actually *be* on vacation.
LAUREN SPIERS HUNTER, Hilliard, Ohio

I do it slowly. Carefully. Sadly.
@ASHBRADEN

I print my photos right away.
I organize them and put them in an album with titles and notes. Then I can browse the album to reflect on the wonderful things that I experienced.
ARLENE BOUCHARD, Lake Ronkonkoma, New York

A to-do list.
Before my vacation, I make one for the office and home. It keeps me from feeling overwhelmed when I return.
KATHARINA BETHEA, Charlotte, North Carolina



I schedule a massage for when I get back. This helps fight the post-vacation blues.
TAMMY BLANKENSHIP, Salem, Virginia

I cut myself some slack when I return.
AFTER AN ACTIVITY-PACKED VACATION, I'M USUALLY TIRED, SO I TAKE IT EASY. I CATCH UP ON MISSED LOCAL NEWS AND CHECK E-MAILS AND PHONE MESSAGES WHILE HAVING A CUP OF SOOTHING TEA. THEN I'LL HEAD TO BED EARLY FOR A REFRESHING NIGHT'S SLEEP.
PATRICIA BAILEY, Cumberland, Maryland

I presort my laundry.
I put all the dirty clothes into a bag before heading home so unpacking (and starting the wash) is more manageable.
KATHERINE MOVALSON, Eugene, Oregon

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Be patient and gentle with yourself upon reentry. Whip up your favorite drink or food discovery from the vacation. The chores will still be there when the motivation shows up.

PAIGE ANNE LEBOUTILLIER, Fort Myers, Florida

I call it the "grocery bomb."

WHEN RETURNING FROM VACATION, A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER FILLS THE VACATIONERS' FRIDGE WITH PERISHABLE ESSENTIALS—MILK, BREAD, EGGS, ETC.—SO THEY DON'T HAVE TO HIT THE GROCERY STORE IMMEDIATELY.

ANNA BUSHNELL, Berlin, Maryland

A memento that takes me back.

My family was in Florida for the holidays, and one day I took a sunset yoga class on the beach. I keep shells and sand from that day on my desk, and when I'm stressed, I'll wiggle my fingers in the bowl and the peace I felt comes back to me.

SHARON PFEUFFER, Salem Township, Michigan

Keeping a strict schedule will help you get back into your routines. Sleep is a big part of that!

@MDEZIEL

Never go back to work on a Monday.

MICHELE HURLEY WRIGHT, Mahwah, New Jersey

I start planning the next vacation.

It's always nice to have something to look forward to, and it makes the reality of returning to the grind less frustrating.

JENNIFER DAKU BURBY, Tampa, Florida

SUBSCRIBER OF THE MONTH

GLENYSE G. THOMPSON

HER ANSWER: My favorite way to ease back into reality is with a "gift box" of items from vacation. I purchase some local artwork, a postcard, or other memorabilia from my travels, pack it up, and ship the package to myself. It usually arrives a day or so after I've returned to work, and it's the best feeling to open it up.

STATS: 48; partnered, with three grown children; mixed-media artist and executive assistant; St. Petersburg, Florida.

HOW DO YOU DE-STRESS?
A round of golf. I started playing in 2015, and in my head I play like I am trying to make the pros. (Nancy Lopez is my invisible golf mentor!) I'm trying to get my score under 90.

IF YOU COULD INVENT SOMETHING, WHAT WOULD IT BE?
Sunscreens typically "ghost" on my skin, so I would invent an unscented, natural version for darker skin tones that provides a heavy dose of protection and quickly absorbs in when applied.

WHAT'S ON YOUR SUMMER BUCKET LIST?
I would like to see more of the beautiful Wynwood Walls murals, in Miami. I'm also creating more art, as I plan to enter a few shows in the fall.

UPCOMING TOPIC
Finish this sentence. *The next president of the United States should ——.*

Go to realsimple.com/yourwords and let us know your answer to this question. Your response could appear on these pages.

I schedule a 7 A.M. grocery delivery for the day after we get back.

BRIDGET MORRISSEY ZOCHER, Park Ridge, Illinois

I do the laundry before I get home.

This means there are no dirty piles to catch up on once I return, and it allows the relaxation to continue (until the alarm goes off the next morning).

HELEN BOUSLAUGH, Woodland, California

I use the toiletries from the hotel for the first days back to remind me of my vacation.

SUSAN CARLINI, Medford, Oregon

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the Realist

UNCOMMON KNOWLEDGE FOR MODERN TIMES

BRAKE FOR THE WORLD'S LARGEST...

WELL, TAKE YOUR PICK: How about the 65-foot-high T. Rex in Cabazon, California; the 20,000-pound ball of twine in Cawker City, Kansas; or maybe the 170-foot-tall catsup bottle in Collinsville, Illinois? There are more than 500 of these so-called world's-largest novelties across the United States. The oldest was erected in 1881—a six-story elephant named Lucy, built by Pennsylvania entrepreneur James V. Lafferty Jr. in hopes of luring land buyers to lots in Margate, New Jersey. With the 1908 invention of the Model T and the creation of paved interstate roads, like Route 66, more and more man-made wonders began to pop up. "Small-town businesses did everything they could to get motorists to stop and spend money," says Joe Sonderman, the author of *Postcards From Route 66.* And the weirder the sights (a giant frying pan, garden gnome, or can of spinach), the more effective they were at drawing passersby. But if you think this type of attraction is a relic of the past, think again. Soap Lake, a city in Washington, has spent 13 years planning the world's largest lava lamp. Far out.

20
THE NUMBER OF DINOSAUR-STATUE ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES, ACCORDING TO DOUG KIRBY, THE PUBLISHER OF ROADSIDEAMERICA.COM.

TRAVELING WITH KIDS? Get a road-trip checklist at realsimple.com/familyroadtrip.

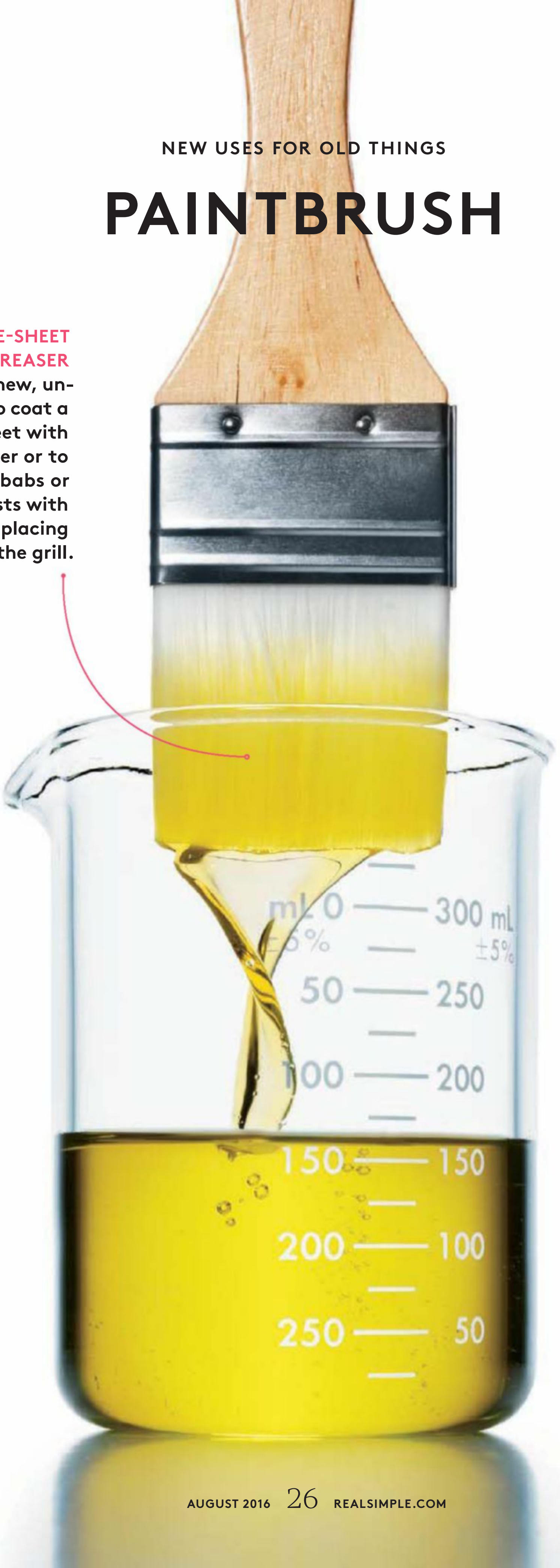
Written by Brandi Broxson

Photograph by Yasu + Junko

PROP STYLING BY MEGUMI EMOTO. SPECIAL THANKS TO ERIKA NELSON, CREATOR OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST THINGS INC.; RICHARD HELFANT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LUCY THE ELEPHANT; JOHN WEISS, CHAIRMAN OF THE ILLINOIS ROUTE 66 PRESERVATION COMMITTEE; AND KIM PATRICK, HEAD OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT FOR GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS NORTH AMERICA.

NEW USES FOR OLD THINGS

PAINTBRUSH



COOKIE-SHEET GREASER

Grab a (new, unused) brush to coat a baking sheet with melted butter or to brush kebabs or chicken breasts with oil before placing them on the grill.

TOASTER SWEEPER

Use the bristles to clear crumbs from the trapdoor. You can also employ a paintbrush to dust other hard-to-clean crevices (in intricate woodwork, say) and delicate items (like plant leaves).

KIDS' SPF APPLICATOR

Make the dreaded task fun (and potentially tickling) by "painting" sunscreen on little ones with a brush.

SAND-CASTLE SCULPTOR

Pro sand-castle builders swear by paintbrushes for smoothing rough edges and erasing mistakes with a flick of the wrist.

Photograph by Yasu + Junko

PROP STYLING BY MEGUMI EMOTO. ILLUSTRATIONS BY PETER OUMANSKI. SPECIAL THANKS TO AMIT SHARMA, DERMATOLOGIST AT THE MAYO CLINIC IN SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA.

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Now what?!?

Smart solutions for life's little disasters

When should I get the kids out of the pool for a summer rainstorm?

ELIZABETH BRUCE, via e-mail

THE FIX: Clear the pool deck at the first sign of either thunder or lightning, says B.J. Fisher, the director of health and safety for the American Lifeguard Association. Don't wait until the storm seems closer, and forget about the flash-to-bang method (counting from when you see lightning to when you hear thunder) to determine how far away the lightning is. "Lightning can travel 25 miles or more from a storm cloud, so we advise evacuating the pool immediately," says Fisher. Just raining? Fisher recommends clearing the pool anyway. Rain can cause pool water to look cloudy, making it difficult to spot a little swimmer in distress. With lightning, follow the same rule even with indoor pools. Everybody out! The water is a potential conductor of electricity.

Written by Brandi Broxson
Illustration by Peter Oumanski

I got self-tanner on my shirt.

CATHY CARNER, via e-mail

THE FIX: This technique works for machine-washable fabrics. (Bring silk, wool, or leather to a dry cleaner.) Hold the underside of the fabric under cold running water to push the color out, says Mary Marlowe Leverette, the laundry expert at About.com. Next, tackle the stain's oily component: Work a dab of dishwashing soap into the stain. Let sit for 15 minutes, then rinse with warm water. Next, mix an oxygen bleach (like OxiClean; $10, amazon.com) and cool water in a basin, following the label directions. Submerge the garment for at least four hours, then launder. If the stain persists, soak and launder again.

The flatiron burned my bangs.

JULIE GRUBB, via Facebook

THE FIX: As soon as you can, apply this DIY hair mask from Dayna Goldstein, a stylist at the Ted Gibson Salon, in New York City: Warm equal parts olive oil and honey in a saucepan over low heat, stirring until combined. Cool the goo to an easy-to-touch temperature, then apply to your bangs from roots to ends. (Or use it all over your hair—it's a great moisturizer.) Leave on for 30 minutes, then rinse with warm water. See your stylist to trim the damage and, if possible, blend the bangs into the rest of your hair. And don't use a volumizing shampoo, which is hard on hair shafts. Then the next time you straighten your hair, first apply a heat protectant, like Kérastase Paris Resistance Ciment Thermique ($40, amazon.com). If possible, set the flatiron between 300 and 400 degrees Fahrenheit, and keep it constantly moving. Glide down a small section of dry hair slowly in a continuous motion. Don't stop or you risk singeing.

HAVE A DISASTER that needs solving? E-mail your problem to askrealsimple@realsimple.com.

SPECIAL THANKS TO B. CHRIS BREWSTER, LIAISON OFFICER AT THE UNITED STATES LIFESAVING ASSOCIATION.

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L'ORÉAL
HAIR EXPERTISE/**PARIS**

Drugstore cheat sheet

The best beauty products in the aisles, handpicked by a pro.

THIS MONTH'S EXPERT

HAIRSTYLIST JEN ATKIN

Based in Los Angeles, Jen Atkin is a celebrity hairstylist whose clients include Jennifer Lopez, Sofia Vergara, and Gwen Stefani. Atkin is the founder of OUAI Haircare and maneaddicts.com.

"After drying, set the top sections of your hair in rollers to boost volume."

1 CAROL'S DAUGHTER HAIR MILK MOISTURIZER
"Dry curls equal frizzy curls. I work this nourishing sweet-almond oil and shea-butter cream into wet hair to keep waves soft." **TO BUY:** $13.50, cvs.com.

2 CONAIR INFINITI PRO 1875W AC MOTOR DRYER
"It gives you results that look professional without the hefty price tag. Don't forget to clean the filter to increase its life span." **TO BUY:** $30, ulta.com.

3 SONIA KASHUK HAIRBRUSH
"The boar and nylon bristles smooth and detangle without pulling. For a sleek look, I mist hair spray directly onto the bristles, then brush through hair." **TO BUY:** $16, target.com.

4 BRAGG'S ORGANIC APPLE CIDER VINEGAR
"When mixed with equal parts water, it can be used as a clarifying rinse to help balance the scalp's pH level and deep-clean hair." **TO BUY:** $4.50, bragg.com.

5 EOS LIP BALM
"I love the quirky sphere shape—I'm always able to spot it in my purse. It's a must on long flights to keep my lips from drying out." **TO BUY:** $3.50, ulta.com.

6 ABBA VOLUMIZING SPRAY
"Whenever I need a style to last, I spritz this at the roots before blow-drying. It holds up against unpredictable weather on the red carpet and in real life." **TO BUY:** $20, ulta.com.

Photograph by James Wojcik

PROP STYLING BY LINDEN ELSTRAN

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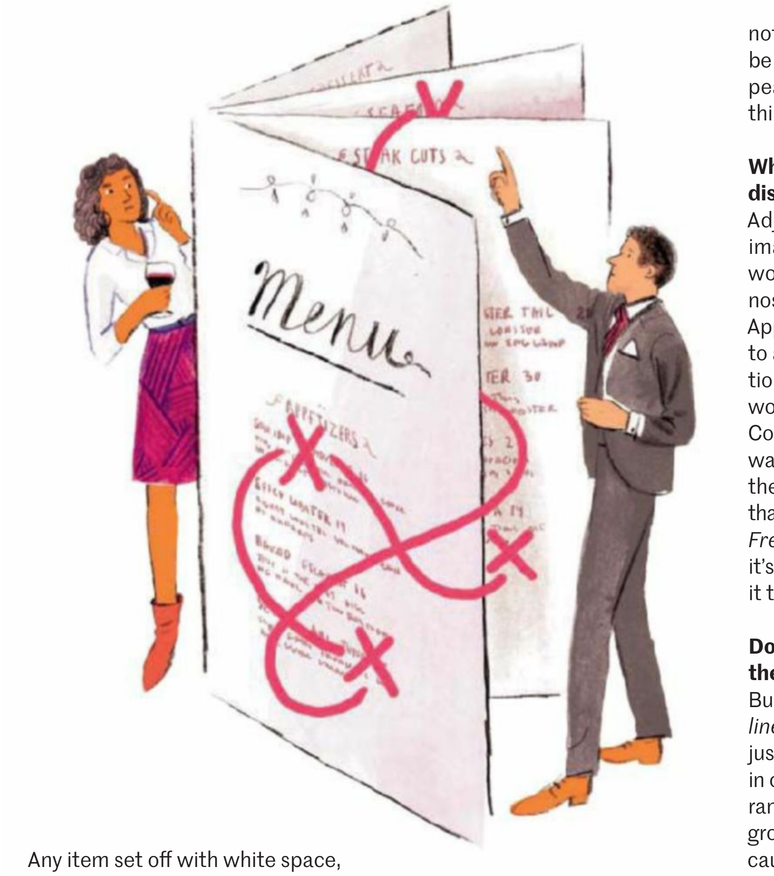
Moonglow shown in new refillable compact.

Restaurant menus

When you're deciding what to order, there's a lot more at play than whether you feel like chicken or fish. Restaurant consultant Aaron Allen dishes on the subtle psychology feeding your decision.



Does menu design really make a difference in what we order?
Yes. Restaurant owners use tactics to emphasize certain items—think high-margin items and signature dishes—over others.

What kinds of tactics?
Research has found that people's eyes naturally stop at specific spots on the menu, so restaurants place highly profitable items in these locations.

Break it down for us.
With a folded menu, the eyes go to the middle, to the top right, to the top left—known as the "golden triangle." When a menu is one page, eyes go middle, top, bottom. Within any section of the menu, most diners order one of the first two items listed. Some tend to pick the last item—that's usually the restaurant's third most cost-effective dish.

Any other tricks we should know?
We're conditioned to notice what's different. Any item set off with white space, a color, or a bold font will grab attention.

Price influences your decision, though.
Yes. But many restaurants leave off dollar signs so you aren't reminded that you're paying for the experience. Menus may also list prices directly after the description, where they're less noticeable. Look out for prices written in letters—that can lead you to spend 30 percent more. Then there are items I call "decoy dishes." A menu may tout a $50 Kobe burger—not many folks will order that—but it serves to make everything else look inexpensive.

Is a prix fixe menu a deal?
Only if you want all those dishes. Otherwise you're being upsold to an appetizer and a dessert you wouldn't have ordered.

And ordering à la carte?
It's another form of pricing psychology. For example, the check may be more at a sushi place than at other restaurants, but it won't feel that way while ordering, since each piece costs $3. Same goes for a glass of wine versus a bottle. You feel better about it at the start, even if you spend more in the end.

What should we know about the drinks list?
Some restaurants may list foreign-sounding wines by the number so diners won't feel intimidated ordering a fancier option. As for cocktails, they offer the biggest profit for the restaurant, and cutesy drink names help sales.

Is it true what they say about "today's specials" being not so special?
Sometimes, yes, yesterday's halibut becomes today's bouillabaisse. But not always. A chef could be serving produce at its peak or trying out something new.

What effect does the dish description have?
Adjectives feed the imagination. Likewise, words that inspire nostalgia—"Grandma's Apple Pie"—are meant to appeal to your emotions. You'll also see the word *fresh* used a lot. Consumers think they want to eat healthy, but the word *healthy* hints that it may not taste good. *Fresh* implies that's it's better for you *and* it tastes good.

Do foodie terms work the same way?
Buzzwords—*free range, line caught, local*—can justify a higher price in our minds. The restaurant may even trace the grouper back to who caught the fish, on what boat, and on what body of water.

Anything else we should be aware of?
The digital menu boards at some fast-casual places can increase the bill by 10 percent or more.

Why?
The upsell is built in. Being asked what type of tequila you'd like in your margarita may not happen with the waitstaff, but here the add-on is always offered. And because it's so convenient, the consumer sometimes goes for it.

ORDER WINE LIKE A PRO
Learn more at realsimple.com/winelist.

Written by Yolanda Wikiel
Illustration by Peter Oumanski

IF YOUR FUN IS
margaritas over mimosas
SAVE A SEAT FOR Sauza
FUN IS CALLING
DRINK SMART
SAUZA® TEQUILA. 40% ALC / VOL. ©2016 SAUZA TEQUILA IMPORT COMPANY, DEERFIELD IL

TREND TO TRY

Saddle bags

The It Bag that also happens to be comfortable, affordable, and classic. Pick one to carry now and forever.

1 **FRINGE** Even though this one is compact, it offers organizing slots inside. $35, reddress boutique.com.

2 **FLORAL** This petite style is equally sweet paired with summer shorts or a fall sweater. Ivanka Trump, $195, lordand taylor.com.

3 **TWO-TONE** Thanks to its slim profile, this leather bag sits nicely on the hip. $170, cambridge satchel.com.

4 **LASER-CUT** With its unique texture, this purse is cooler than your typical neutral. Elizabeth and James, $445, nordstrom.com.

5 **TASSELS** Made of rich cognac leather, this bag fits a lot without feeling bulky. $198, banana republic.com.

Written by Yolanda Wikiel
Photograph by Yasu + Junko

PROP STYLING BY MEGUMI EMOTO

IT'S TIME TO MOVE FORWARD
We knew it was time for a better way to get a home loan, so we created Rocket Mortgage. With our completely online process, you can move forward with a custom mortgage solution in minutes.
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HOW DID WE GET HERE?

Summer blockbusters

A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away, studios would use summer as a dumping ground for bad movies. These iconic flicks changed the story line.

Once a term for movies that grossed more than others, *blockbusters* now refers to action-packed, special-effects–driven spectacles, says author Tom Shone.

More than $700 million worth of *Star Wars* toys were sold in 2015, 38 years after the first movie debuted.

1975

Dun-dun...dun-dun... Jaws, Steven Spielberg's thriller about a great white shark, makes a killer splash and becomes the first movie to earn more than $100 million domestically. The film industry quickly realizes, "We're gonna need bigger movies."

1977

George Lucas's space saga, *Star Wars,* a sleeper hit, shows that it has the same box-office mojo as *Jaws,* raking in $193.8 million in the United States, then cashing in with official movie merchandise.

1984

Families flock to *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom,* the year's third-highest-grossing flick, only be to be horrified by a violent sacrifice scene. Spielberg suggests the addition of a PG-13 rating, and in August *Red Dawn* becomes the first PG-13 movie.

1989

Holy *Batman*-ia! Tim Burton's comic-book noir is the center of a cross-promotional marketing campaign, which rolls out toys and fast-food tie-ins, well ahead of the June 23 release. When it hits theaters, *Batman* earns a record $42.6 million in three days.

1993

Aided by CGI (computer-generated imagery) dinosaurs, Spielberg takes another chomp at the movie landscape with *Jurassic Park.* A crowd-pleaser that doesn't require mastery of English, it sweeps the global market, earning $224 million more overseas than here.

128

THE NUMBER OF MOVIES BASED ON COMIC BOOKS MADE SINCE 1989, ACCORDING TO BOXOFFICEMOJO.COM.

1994

Forrest Gump runs into the hearts of Academy voters. The heartfelt dramedy is the first movie to gross more than $100 million *and* win the Oscar for Best Picture.

1996

The White House is blown up by aliens in *Independence Day,* and "the end of the world becomes extremely marketable," says Purdue University's film-program director, Lance Duerfarhd. "It paves the way for apocalyptic hits *San Andreas* and *28 Days Later.*"

2001

Shrek stomps the competition, making $484 million worldwide and winning the first-ever Oscar for Best Animated Feature. Because the movie is packed with jokes for kids and adults alike, every family member wants to see it.

Thanks to 1994's *The Lion King,* animated films, like this year's *Finding Dory,* are now summer staples.

2016

With Marvel films mapped out to 2028 and *Star Wars* sequels set till 2020, franchises are here to stay. "The cost of filmmaking is so prohibitive that you can only make money with a built-in audience," says Tom Shone, the author of *Blockbuster.* Witness this year's lineup: *Captain America: Civil War* (a franchise), *Ghostbusters* (a reboot), and *Independence Day: Resurgence* (a sequel).

Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End, from 2007, is the most expensive movie ever made, costing a reported $341 million when adjusted for inflation.

Written by Liz Loerke

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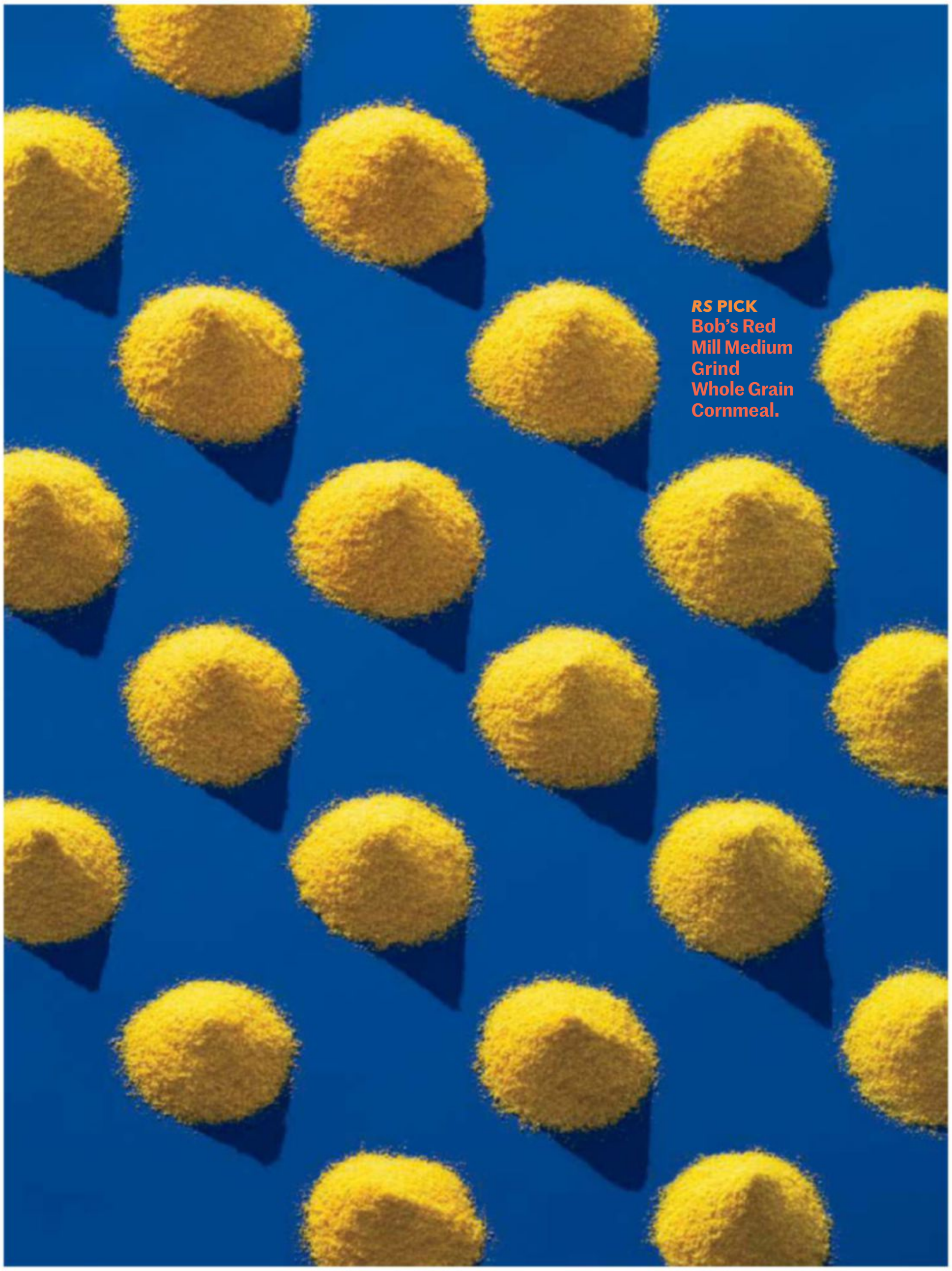
THE STAPLE

CORNMEAL

When corn kernels are dried and ground, they transform into a magical powder that can not only make corn bread but also add delicious texture to other baked goods and prevent pizza dough from sticking. Opt for a fine or medium grind for most recipes. (Polenta and grits are coarsely ground corn.) For a dose of whole grains, look for cornmeal that includes the germ and the bran.

Written by Heath Goldman
Recipes by Robby Melvin
Photograph by Yasu + Junko



3 QUICK IDEAS

Johnnycakes

Stir together ¾ cup fine cornmeal, ¾ cup all-purpose flour, 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar, and ½ tsp. each baking powder, baking soda, and kosher salt. Whisk together 1¼ cups buttermilk, 3 Tbsp. melted butter, and 2 large eggs separately; whisk into the flour mixture until smooth. Cook ¼-cupfuls of batter in a greased skillet until golden, 3 minutes per side. Serve with maple syrup. Serves 4.

Cornmeal drop biscuits

Toss together ½ cup cubed butter, chilled; 1½ cups all-purpose flour; ¾ cup fine cornmeal; 1 Tbsp. granulated sugar; 2 tsp. baking powder; 1 tsp. kosher salt; and ½ tsp. baking soda. Add ¾ cup whole milk; stir until the dough comes together. Bake ¼-cupfuls of the dough on a lined baking sheet at 375°F until golden, 20 minutes. Serves 8.

Mexican cornmeal

Bring 2 cups milk, 1½ cups water, and 1½ tsp. kosher salt to a boil. Whisk in 1½ cups cornmeal. Add 3 Tbsp. butter; whisk until just thickened, 4 minutes. Serve in 4 bowls topped with black beans, fresh salsa, and grated Cheddar. Serves 4.

CORNMEAL GALORE
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2 EARBUD EARRINGS
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1

Comes in sizes XXS to XL.

2

*Earbuds not included.

3

4

3 TOTABLE STOVE
Bring home cooking to the great outdoors—or a park picnic—with this mini two-burner unit that slings over your shoulder for easy carrying. Onja stove, $140, primus.us.

4 PRO IPHONE CAMERA
Smaller than a deck of cards, this camera attaches to the charging port on your cell to snap DSLR-quality pics without the heavy equipment. $499, dxo.com.

Written by Tanya Christian
Photographs by Philip Friedman

Eco-quandary

SHOULD YOU HOSE DOWN YOUR CAR AT HOME OR TAKE IT TO THE CAR WASH?

Believe it or not, the pro car wash is greener. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), commercial car washes are typically required to dispose of wastewater properly. Additionally, many filter and recycle that water. When you wash your car at home, the runoff can pollute nearby waterways with detergent, motor oil, and other residue. (Visit carwash.org/watersavers to find car washes with eco-friendly water practices located near you.)

IF YOU PREFER TO WASH AT HOME, HEED THE EPA.

- Wash your vehicle on a pervious surface, like grass or gravel (not concrete or asphalt), so the runoff is filtered before reaching a body of water.
- Use a phosphate-free, nontoxic soap from the EPA's Safer Choice list (epa.gov/saferchoice).
- Wring out sponges and rags over a bucket, then dump that water into a sink or a toilet, not a storm drain.

—*KAITLYN PIRIE*

PROP STYLING BY MAI TRAN. ILLUSTRATION BY PETER OUMANSKI. SPECIAL THANKS TO ERIC WULF, CEO OF THE INTERNATIONAL CARWASH ASSOCIATION. URBANEARS SUMPAN EARBUDS, $35, URBANEARS.COM.

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Home alone

Eat like slobs? Yes. Walk around the house naked? Sure. Swear like sailors? Of course! After tearfully bidding good-bye to their college-bound kids, *Ann Leary* and her husband discovered that the empty-nest syndrome was, well, for the birds.

Photograph by Cavan Images

OFFSET

WHEN WE DROPPED our oldest child, Jack, at college for the first time, we were all very cheery while we unloaded the car. My husband, Denis; our daughter, Devin; and I helped Jack carry his stuff up to his dorm room. We marveled at the closet space and groaned at the thinness of the mattress. Eventually we found ourselves looking around the room with forced smiles.

"Is that everything?" Denis and I said, over and over again. "Maybe we left something in the car. That can't be everything." We had arrived at the moment we had dreaded, not just all summer but for the past 18 years. It was time to say good-bye to our son's childhood. "What about your winter jacket? What about your soap?" I cried. "I feel like

we forgot something." But it was all there—all the stuff of this boy. His guitar, his sneakers, his sheets and towels and shaving gear, his great sense of humor, his optimism, his grace and kindness, his intuitive wisdom, his big, generous heart. There it all was. There was nothing else for us to do. It was time to go.

Two years later, we had to deliver Devin to her college. Again, I was overcome with emotion when I realized the moment had arrived. It was time to say good-bye. "Why do I feel like we forgot something?" I kept saying. "Let's check the car one more time." I remember sobbing as we drove away. I remember Denis pulling the car over. After a few minutes, I said, "I'm OK. You can keep driving." But he didn't say anything. He didn't start driving.

"You can go. I'm fine," I sniffed.

Then I heard a strange sound, a loud hacking and choking sound coming from his direction. I looked over and saw that the man had buried his face in his hands and was bawling like a baby.

"She just looked…so small," he said, and I knew what he meant. Devin is on the tall side, but she looked so tiny and vulnerable when she walked away from our car. There she went, up those cold stone steps that led into that monstrous, Gothic-looking dormitory. There she went, with her backpack and cell phone, her wisdom and humor, her quick, inquisitive mind, her sweet smile. She was born with an old soul, with an uncanny knowledge about people. She always loved animals and all fragile things. She could walk when she was nine months old. Now she was surrounded by strangers. Why had we taught her to walk? We drove home so slowly. We dreaded returning to our empty house, but eventually, of course, we were there.

I watched a *Seinfeld* rerun as I cooked our dinner that evening. My eyes were swollen, and my nose raw from crying. When the meal was ready, Denis shuffled into the kitchen and automatically turned the TV off. "Wait," I said. And then I uttered the words my husband had waited 20 years for me to say: "Let's watch TV while we eat."

About the author

Ann Leary's latest novel, *The Children,* was published in May. She is also the author of the *New York Times* best-selling novel *The Good House,* as well as *Outtakes From a Marriage* and *An Innocent, A Broad.* She and her husband, Denis, live in northwestern Connecticut.

And that's when the fun began.

In our home, while the children lived with us, television had been banned during mealtime and on school nights. We had family dinners every night. This was a time to talk to one another—to connect. That first night of our empty nest, and every night that followed, Denis and I didn't ask about each other's day or discuss current events. Instead, we laughed at the TV with mouths full of food. We slouched over our plates and rested our elbows on the table. We ate with our fingers if we felt like it—and we usually felt like it. When one of us needed the salt, we lurched across the table and grabbed it without asking for it to please be passed. We rolled our corn in the butter. We slurped the last drops of soup from our bowls. We still placed our napkins on our laps, but not because it was polite; it was because we made such a mess and wanted to protect our clothes.

That was just the beginning. Within days, our house became a sort of hedonist temple. We swore, not just by accident when slamming a finger in a drawer or stubbing a toe. We swore all the time. One day, I needed to get something out of the dryer, so I ventured out of our bedroom in my underwear. After I did my usual red-faced dash to the dryer, I stopped. Why was I being stealthy? The people who reacted to my body with retching sounds were gone. The one who liked me in my underwear was charging up the stairs to get a closer look.

Before long, we walked around our house as naked as jaybirds. We had sex whenever we wanted, wherever we wanted. We sang loudly with music—our music. We danced, not as if nobody were watching, but because nobody was watching (and laughing). We gossiped about our friends, made fun of people's accents or the way people dressed. We were

Our daughter was born with an old soul, with an uncanny knowledge about people. She could walk when she was nine months old. Now she was surrounded by strangers. Why had we taught her to walk?

PHOTOGRAPH BY CATHRINE WHITE

NOTHING

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petty and closed-minded again! We weren't aware of how hard it was being good, until we no longer had to be good. It had been exhausting. Now we were free.

I'm sure many people don't alter their behavior much when they become parents. I think those are people who are naturally altruistic, conscientious, and polite. We're not really like that. But for 20 long years we tried hard to act as if we were. We wanted to set an example for our children—a good example. For instance, whenever I gossiped on the phone with my sister, I'd have to change the subject if my daughter walked into the room. It wasn't just because I didn't want her to hear what I was saying; I didn't want her to hear me saying it. Because gossiping isn't nice. Eventually it became easier to just not gossip very much.

Denis and I had to act like better people, and over time it became less of an act. If we lost at tennis or Scrabble while playing with the kids, Denis and I had to smile and congratulate the winners instead of sulking and accusing each other of cheating, as we had always done before we had children. Eventually, by pretending we were good sports, we became good sports. (Well, everything is relative. We tried—that's my point.)

During the two decades that we raised our kids, my husband and I were better people. We weren't perfect, of course, but we worked at being the best people we could be. Our two children deserved better than us—we knew this as soon as they were born. So we worked hard at being better. Now I understand that this wasn't just good for our children; it was good for us. But

I'm sure many people don't alter their behavior much when they become parents. I think those are people who are naturally altruistic, conscientious, and polite. We're not really like that.

it required a lot of work. So we're in semiretirement. When the kids come home to visit, we put on our clothes, clean up our language, and turn off the TV during dinner. They know we swear like pirates and slouch around in our underwear when they're not here. They know that we're lazy, petty, and sloppy. But we try to rein it in when they're here. It's good for us to try to be good during these visits. Just for old times' sake. Just for the children. ■

WANT MORE?
Watch Ann Leary in conversation with *Real Simple*'s editor, Kristin van Ogtrop, at realsimple.com/annleary.

LIFE LESSONS ESSAY CONTEST: WHAT WAS THE MOST DRAMATIC CHANGE YOU EVER HAD TO MAKE?

Maybe you had to move cross-country after being relocated for a job, opening up new possibilities along with fears. Or maybe you needed to sell your house or leave an apartment before you expected to. How did that situation influence the rest of your life? If one unavoidable shift changed your world—for good and bad—in enduring ways, write it down and share it with *Real Simple.*

Enter *Real Simple*'s ninth annual Life Lessons Essay Contest and you could have your essay published in *Real Simple* and receive a prize of $3,000.

Send your typed, double-spaced submission (1,500 words maximum, preferably in a Microsoft Word document) to lifelessons@realsimple.com. Contest began at 12:01 A.M. EST on Monday, May 23, 2016, and runs through 11:50 P.M. EST on Monday, September 19, 2016. All submitted essays must be nonfiction. Open to legal residents of the United States age 19 or older at time of entry. Void where prohibited by law. (Entries will not be returned.)

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Modern Manners

***REAL SIMPLE*'S ETIQUETTE EXPERT, CATHERINE NEWMAN, OFFERS HER BEST ADVICE ON YOUR SOCIAL QUANDARIES.**

How do you decline an invitation to a party or a playdate when you think that someone's child is a bad influence on your kid? I have a chatty seven-year-old who doesn't always uphold the "excuse" I sometimes give. With back-to-school upon us, I'm wondering how to handle this type of situation. Am I wrong to tell a little white lie to get out of something? And what about asking my child to play along?

C.S.

One nice thing about being seven years old is that your parents can still rescue you. If the other kid is aggressive or difficult—high drama, say, or a troublemaker—your child might crave and dread his or her company in equal measure. (The mischievous kids can be thrilling in small doses, after all.) It might be a relief to be spared a playdate. The question is: When should kids be inducted into the White Lie Society that they will inevitably join? You could say, "I'm going to tell Kate's mom that we're busy, because it seems like you could use a break and I don't want to hurt their feelings." The white lie, used judiciously and with compassion, can be a form of social grace. If we're talking instead about a difference in household behaviors that you're uncomfortable with (soda drinking, cursing, video gaming), it might make sense to start a conversation with your child about your family's values and your expectations. That way, when she does go over to that friend's house, she'll know how to handle taboo temptations.

About Catherine

The author of *Catastrophic Happiness* and *Waiting for Birdy,* Catherine Newman has shared her wisdom on matters ranging from family and friends to happiness and pickling in numerous publications. She gets advice from her husband and two opinionated children in Amherst, Massachusetts.

PORTRAIT BY SARAH MAYCOCK

A longtime friend chose not to attend my only son's wedding and my future daughter-in-law's bridal shower. She is socially uncomfortable and self-conscious about her weight gain, but I was hoping that she could put those things aside and celebrate with me. I told her how much it would mean to me if she attended, and I was extremely disappointed and hurt that she didn't. I understand not coming to the wedding, because it was out of town, but the bridal shower wasn't. She said she needed to be home with her son the weekend before he started middle school. Really? I feel as if I've supported her throughout many difficult times, and this was the one thing I was asking her to do for me. We haven't spoken in over six months. Am I being unreasonable and selfish, or is she? Do I just let this friendship fade away?

P. L.

If, as you say, on the single occasion when you asked your friend for something, she did not provide it, then, yes, by all means, let the friendship fade away. That does not sound like a relationship worth fighting for. But if, as might be more likely, this is a person who has been a good friend to you—albeit in different ways than you have been a good friend to her—then you might want to reconsider your interpretation of the events. You hoped that your friend would be able to put aside her issues and celebrate with you, but it sounds like she couldn't.

She offered a face-saving excuse (she had to stay home with her child) rather than the sad truth that you suspect (she felt bad about herself). But what can be gained by pointing out this discrepancy? Being a good friend means understanding her pain, even if you're disappointed by it, and having compassion. You were enjoying a happy occasion, and she was too unhappy to join you. You got the better end of that deal. I would cut your friend some slack and reach out.

Recently a friend of mine, with whom I work directly, got a promotion, and her demeanor has changed. She insists that she is right all of the time and talks down to me. I mentioned how this made me feel, and she played it off as if she hadn't noticed, which hurt my feelings. I'm no longer happy at work or hanging out with her outside of work. I've thought about talking to my direct manager. She has said that she, too, has felt bullied by this friend. But I know that they're close, and I don't trust that my conversation would be kept private. What should I do?

L. R.

If you've gotten to the point where you're considering complaining about your friend to a supervisor, that does not sound like a valuable friendship. On the other hand, if this same supervisor has vented to you about the friend, that does not sound like a viable professional situation. It's a tough spot. But I would try once more to clear the air and speak to your friend. Give concrete examples of her behavior and the way she speaks to you that you hope will change. And if she can't, doesn't, or doesn't want to try? Then change your own tune. Treat her with professional courtesy, don't gossip about her at the office, and move forward as a reliable (if saddened) coworker.

I have a dear friend who lives nearby, and we try to look out for each other—finding yard-sale items that the other can use, trading pet care, etc. Her household is chaotic, and it seems that every time I lend or give her anything, it ends up broken, lost, or dirty. Most recently I bought her a floor steamer, which ended up broken in a matter of months. How do I say I'm no longer comfortable lending things to her?

K. R.

You are up against what I see as the classic etiquette conundrum of people versus stuff. My rule of thumb is to value, as much as possible, relationships over things. That said, I really hear you, as a person who has struggled similarly with my attachment to certain objects. Let's put aside the floor steamer, which was a gift. What she does with it is not for you to fret over. As for your stuff, here's my advice: (1) Don't lend sentimental or irreplaceable things. (2) Own your concern: "I love how generous we are with each other. But can I confess that I'm neurotic about my stuff? I want to get it back in good shape, and I don't want to end up upset with you if I don't." (3) Reassess your attachment to the item. If it's tied up with a judgment about your friend's lack of caretaking, try to remind yourself that different people have different priorities, and if you can, let it go.

I recently went to a Broadway show that I had waited months to get tickets to. A man who happened to be very large sat next to me. He spread out into my seat and also fidgeted. By the end of the show, I was leaning in an awkward position to get away from him. I didn't want to say anything to embarrass him, but how should I have handled this?

A. S.

(Was it *Hamilton*? Was it? I'd be so jealous!) It sounds as if you were frustrated that your long awaited experience was less than ideally comfortable. That was surely true for your neighbor as well. When someone buys a ticket, the obligation falls to the service provider—the airline, the theater, the concert venue—to accommodate that person with adequate seating. To quote the brilliant writer and fat-acceptance activist Lindy West: "If you think fat people are 'the problem' (and not, say, airlines hoping to squeeze out an extra $200 million a year in revenue, or consumers who want cheap airline tickets without sacrificing amenities), you are penalizing a significant number of human beings emotionally and financially for a disease or disability that already complicates their lives." In other words, your seatmate could do nothing about his size and the theater's lack of space. And you should have done nothing but muster compassion. What was a three-hour one-off for you is a daily occurrence for him—and in a culture that makes it very uncomfortable, in every way, to be fat. You could have spoken with a manager about seat reassignment or written a letter to the theater explaining the trouble with its seating and how that undermined your enjoyment of the show. But, really, it's a difficult world, and we can only do our best to ease each other's passage through it.

HAVE AN ETIQUETTE QUESTION?

Submit your social conundrums to Catherine at **REALSIMPLE.COM/MODERNMANNERS.** Selected letters will be featured on these pages every month.

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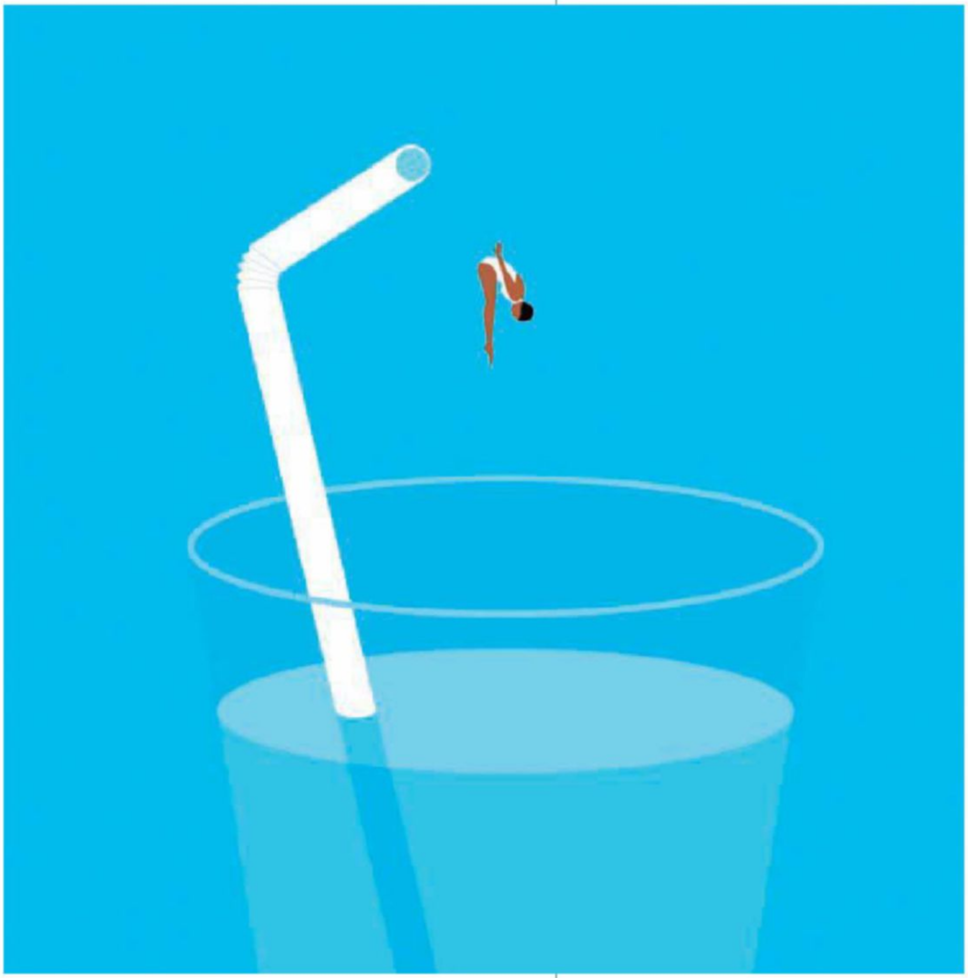

Written by Rebecca Webber
Illustration by Ben Wiseman

1

DENDY ENGELMAN

Chill strategically.

There are pulse points you probably know about—on your inner wrists and near the carotid arteries in your neck—where the blood vessels are closer to the surface of the skin. Putting an ice pack or a cold, wet towel—anything cooler than the air temperature—on those points will lower your blood temperature. Then the blood circulates to the rest of your body and cools it down. Lesser-known pulse points are the tops of your feet. These might not be as accessible outside, when you have shoes on, but if you're in bed on a hot summer night, kick off the covers to cool down. And skip the body lotion. It creates a barrier that traps body heat. Use gel or spray moisturizers instead. They evaporate quickly off the skin, removing heat. Even better if the gel is mentholated or made with peppermint oil, which makes your skin feel even cooler.

2

RONALD A. PRIMAS

Eat watermelon…

It really might be the perfect fruit for when it's hot out. All fruits and vegetables contain water, which helps to hydrate you, and fiber, which holds on to water as it travels through your colon, then releases water slowly as you need it. (It's like an extra store of fluid that your body can use to stay cool.) But watermelon has *a lot* of fiber and *a lot* of water. There's a good reason it's such a staple in the summertime.

3

JACKIE BARCAL

…and salt it.

I train athletes as young as six years old in the heat all summer. They sweat out a lot of sodium. Low sodium can contribute to cramping, so they need to replace it. Any salty snack will do—pretzels, beef jerky, salty crackers, things that will put sodium into their bodies and also make them reach for the water bottle. Salting watermelon has become popular among sports dietitians—it's a unique, salty-sweet taste. Sports dietitians use salted melon as a recovery snack because it replaces fluid and sodium lost in sweat. I tell the kids that water and salt are like best friends: You need sodium to help water stay in your muscles. Always pair them together.

FEELS DREAMY

Learn how to fall asleep more easily when it's hot at realsimple.com/summersleep.

4

ABBY WINES

Wear long sleeves.

Surprisingly, it can be cooler to wear long sleeves and long pants than shorts and a tank top. You want loose-fitting clothing in light colors to reflect the sun and keep it from heating your skin. Go with cotton or linen, which breathe well but also hold moisture (unlike a synthetic, quick-drying fabric). They will keep your sweat close to the body, and as it evaporates, it cools you. Evaporation is a very cheap and very effective way to cool off. Of course it makes the most sense in a dry heat, like in Death Valley, where I live. This might not work as well in South Florida.

5

VINNY CANOSA

Find a breeze—or make one.

Even on a 90-degree day in Miami Beach, it's not that bad when you have an ocean breeze. You can also bring a battery-operated fan, something small and portable. And as someone who has seen a lot of heat exhaustion hit midday, I'll say it's not enough to start drinking fluids when you get to the beach or wherever you're headed. You need to be hydrated before you go. Have lots of water with your breakfast—not coffee.

THE EXPERTS

DENDY ENGELMAN is a dermatologist and the director of dermatologic surgery at Metropolitan Hospital, in New York. She lives in New York City.

RONALD A. PRIMAS is an internist who specializes in integrative and preventive medicine. He lives in New York City.

JACKIE BARCAL is the head of nutrition at the IMG Academy, a boarding school and sports training facility. She lives in Bradenton, Florida.

ABBY WINES is the management assistant at Death Valley National Park. She lives in Death Valley, California, which holds the world record for the highest-recorded air temperature.

VINNY CANOSA is the chief of Miami Beach Ocean Rescue. He lives in Hollywood, Florida.

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Here's a nice way to find comfort when you're feeling a bit on edge. Close your eyes. Turn your attention inward, scanning your body until you find a spot that feels comfortable. It could be a finger or an elbow. (Take your time—it's there somewhere.) Once you find it, let yourself stay there, noticing the shape and the texture and any sensation that you might be experiencing there. Now imagine your inhale finding its way to this place. Very gently and slowly let your breath begin to carry and spread the feeling of comfort from this small spot—in any direction, freely through your body. Keep going until this sense of comfort has spread to every part, every cell. Allow yourself to rest in this inner comfort for a minute or more.

THIS MONTH'S EXPERT

MARGARET TOWNSEND is a certified breathwork and Hakomi practitioner in the Portland, Oregon, area. She has taught for 25 years, blending her training in shiatsu, Reiki, Qigong, yoga, and other disciplines. Find her at thelivingbreath.com.

Photograph by Matt Armendariz

OFFSET

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the Guide

HOME

ONLINE FURNITURE CONSIGNMENT 101 87

HOW TO DEAL WITH BAD NEIGHBORS 79

FASHION

9 PIECES YOUR WORK WARDROBE NEEDS NOW 101

WORK & MONEY

THE VIEW FROM HERE: DHIVYA SURYADEVARA 135

ASK BUCKY 136

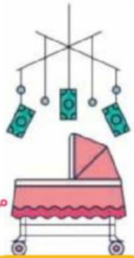
ASK THE ORGANIZER 95

THE VETS WILL SEE YOU NOW 75

BEAUTY

SPA IN A BOTTLE
Refreshing face mists for every skin type...... 70

PRETTY SMART 65



HOW TO RETIRE WITH ENOUGH MONEY 138

OFF-HOURS WORK ETIQUETTE 142

HEALTH

10 LIFESTYLE HABITS TO KEEP YOU SAFER 114

FIVE-MINUTE TRAINER 124

FAMILY

TALKING TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT SERIOUS ILLNESS 127

THE DETAILS MAKE THE STORY

Booties and bonnet by Irulea

Four generations of family

EXCLUSIVE Gorgeous Summer Weddings!
Jennie Garth's Romantic Ceremony, Nicky Hilton's Lavish Bash & More!

People

THE ROYAL FAB FOUR!

NEW INTERVIEW & PHOTOS

Our 'Lovely Little Family'

Prince William shares surprising details about 'little joy' Charlotte, 'little monkey' George and how Kate is 'doing an amazing job as a mother'

Plus PLANS FOR BABY NUMBER 3!

Ben & Jen's 'DIFFICULT' NEXT STEPS

ONE DIRECTION BABY! LOUIS IS GOING TO BE A DAD!

ONLY IN People

A shawl of fine merino wool

Coins to commemorate Charlotte's birth

An heirloom for a christening gown

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People

New tube

Travel in style with these 1.3-ounce iterations of **Marvis Toothpaste** ($6 to $7.50 each, sephora.com). In flavors like Jasmin Mint, Amarelli Licorice, Aquatic Mint, and Ginger Mint, they up the game in your toiletry Ziploc.

PRETTY SMART

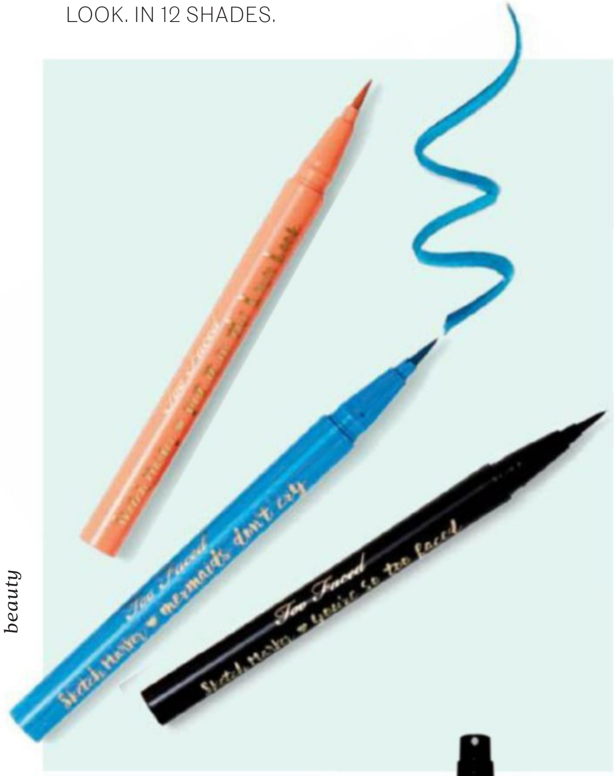
The latest beauty products and tips that save time, money, and—best of all—your sanity.

Written by Heather Muir
Photographs by Danny Kim

PROP STYLING BY WENDY SCHELAH FOR HALLEY RESOURCES INC.

FINE ART

INSPIRED BY JAPANESE CALLIGRAPHY PENS, **TOO FACED SKETCH MARKER LIQUID ART LINER** ($20 EACH, TOOFACED.COM) HAS A FLEXIBLE FELT TIP THAT DEPOSITS WATERPROOF COLOR IN PAINTBRUSHLIKE STROKES. USE THE TIP TO DRAW A THIN LINE OR ITS SIDE FOR A THICKER LOOK. IN 12 SHADES.

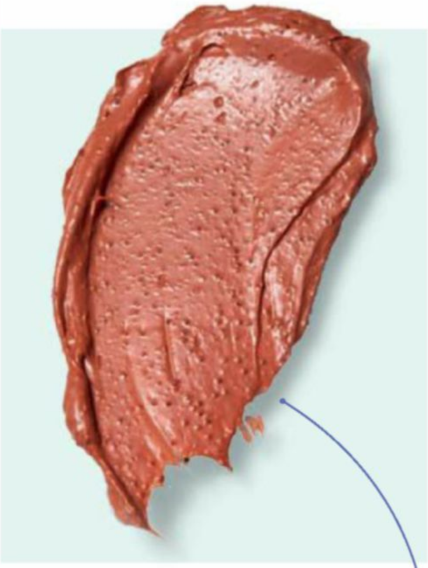


TOUCH BASE

Need help finding the right foundation shade? Check out Estée Lauder's iMatch Digital Shade Finder system (at more than 1,100 counters, free of charge). A beauty adviser presses a camera onto your skin in three places, then the device determines your closest Estée Lauder shades across all their foundation products.

There's an app for that

Estée Lauder Double Wear Nude Cushion Stick Radiant Makeup ($39.50, esteelauder.com) houses foundation and a sponge in one. Twist the base until makeup appears, dot it onto skin, then buff. In 17 shades. (Find yours by using the Digital Shade Finder; see left.)



Good takeaway

Instead of scrubbing off your waterproof make-up, how about gently dissolving it? Massage **It Cosmetics Bye Bye Makeup 3-in-1 Makeup Melting Cleansing Balm** ($38, itcosmetics.com) onto dry skin, then wipe off with a warm washcloth.

An apple a day...

...keeps the tangles away. Mist **dpHUE Apple Cider Vinegar Leave-In Hair Therapy** ($30, ulta.com) onto damp hair before styling. Argan and macadamia oils add softness, while the vinegar closes the cuticles so hair looks shiny.

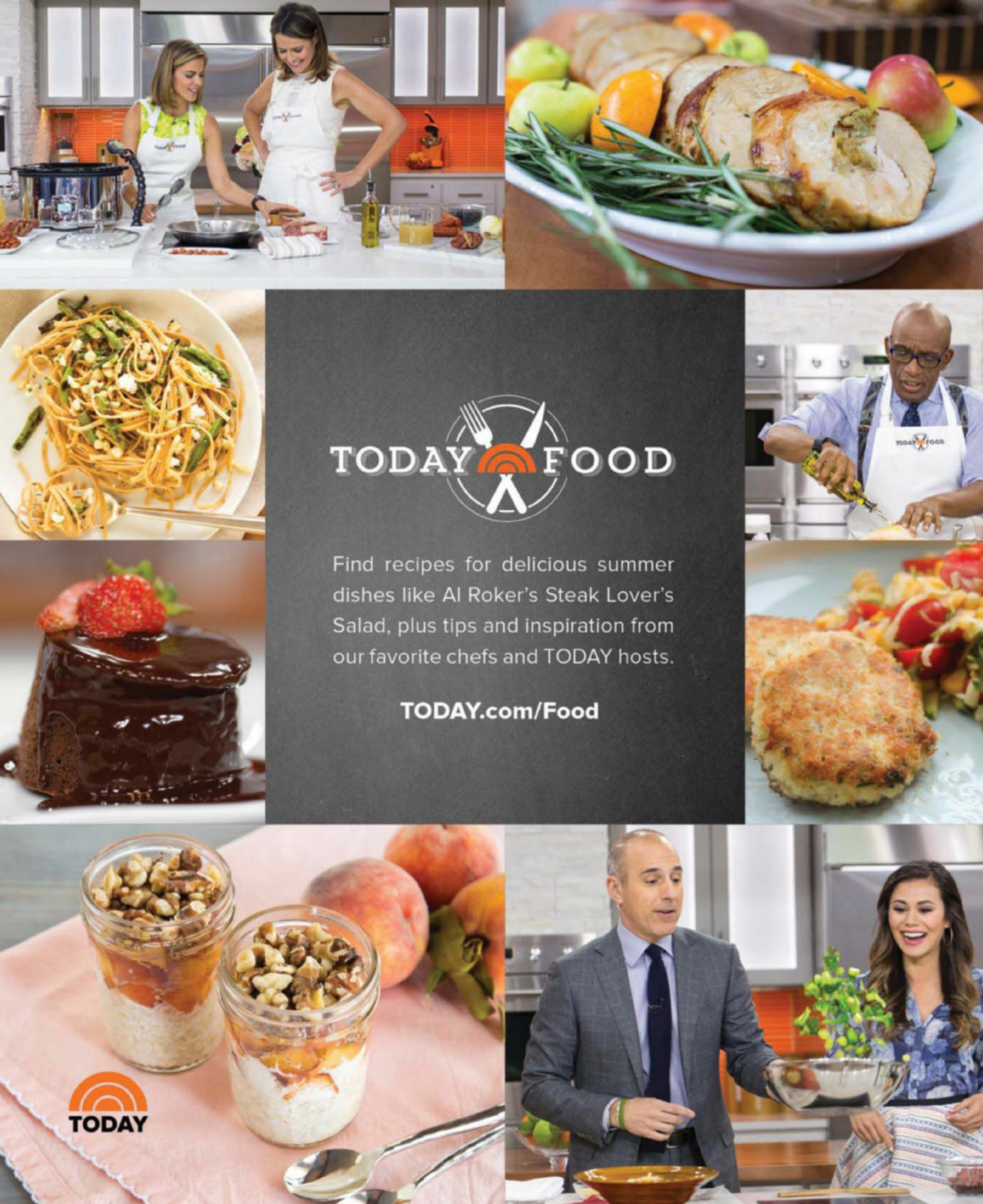
Just so we're clear

L'Oréal Paris Pure-Clay Mask Exfoliate Refining Treatment Mask ($13 at drugstores) packs mineral clays that suck out grime. The result: Pores look less noticeable, and your T-zone is mattified. Smooth onto clean skin, and rinse after 10 minutes.

Silver fix

Now you see it, now you don't. **Everpro Gray Away Root Touch-Up Magnetic Powder** ($10, ulta.com) hides roots and sticks to hair until you shampoo. Dab the sponge into the powder, then brush on regrowth. In three shades.

EVERPRO: PHOTOGRAPH BY RALPH SMITH


TODAY FOOD
Find recipes for delicious summer dishes like Al Roker's Steak Lover's Salad, plus tips and inspiration from our favorite chefs and TODAY hosts.
TODAY.com/Food
TODAY

Crowning glory

Rehab strawlike strands by working **R+Co High Dive Moisture+Shine Crème** ($27, randco.com) through damp hair, then air-drying or blow-drying. Provitamin B_5, sunflower-seed extract, and vitamin E hydrate to help erase damage.

Down to the nitty-gritty

Combat congested summer skin with **Tarte Frxxxtion Stick Exfoliating Cleanser** ($22, tarte.com). Rub the solid, travel-friendly gel onto wet skin to form a cool lather that's laced with skin-smoothing algae microbeads.

FLIP IT OVER—THE REVERSE SIDE OF THE BRUSH HEAD IS A MIRROR.

RAINBOW BRIGHT

STRAIGHT OUT OF A FUNFETTI CAKE BOX, THE **CHI KABLOOM BRUSH** ($10, LOXABEAUTY.COM) HAS SQUIGGLE-SHAPED NYLON BRISTLES THAT HELP ADD LIFT AT YOUR CROWN. ONLY FIVE INCHES LONG, IT FITS (AND WILL NEVER GET LOST) IN YOUR BAG.

Wrinkle release

The gold-standard wrinkle ingredient, retinol, now comes in the form of a face wipe: Use **Skin+Pharmacy Advanced Anti-Aging Therapy Retinol Wipes** ($20 for 20 wipes, cvs.com) before bed to lessen the look of fine lines over time.

Bikini blues

Ingrown hairs got you down? Prevent future bumps from forming by dabbing on a drop of **Fur Oil** ($39, furyou.com) daily after showering. The all-natural formula has grapeseed oil to soften hair and tea-tree oil to help clear pores.

HOW TO…

SCORE A SMOOTH BIKINI LINE

STEP 1
Shave at the end of your shower—the softer your skin, the easier it will be to remove hair. Before reaching for your razor, gently exfoliate your bikini line. Doing so gets rid of dead skin cells that block the razor from getting close to the hair, and it teases out ingrowns. Use a washcloth and make small, circular motions.

STEP 2
Apply a thin layer of shaving cream. (Look for shea butter or coconut oil in the ingredients list.) Then, using a new razor blade (replace it after seven shaves), make one pass downward. (If you shave against the hair, you risk red bumps.)

STEP 3
Rinse, then pat dry. If you're prone to ingrowns, hold a cold compress on the area for a few minutes to reduce redness, then apply an antiseptic serum (like Fur Oil; see left).

SKIN+PHARMACY AND TARTE: PHOTOGRAPHS BY RALPH SMITH

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FACIAL MISTS

Hydrate, tone, prime, and soothe your skin without even touching your face. These spritzers (out of 50 tested) deliver benefits fast and refresh your senses.

Written by
Chelsea Traber Burns
Photograph by
Levi Brown

1 BEST MULTITASKER
Cosmos Lavender + Witch Hazel Toner
Keep calm and carry on with this do-it-all tonic. Infused with lavender essential oil, it soothes irritated skin, helps take the sting out of bug bites, and may ease headache pain. Close your eyes and mist onto clean skin.
TO BUY: $28.50, cosmos botanicals.com.

2 BEST MAKEUP SETTER
Maybelline New York Face Studio Master Fix Setting Spray
Use this as the last step in your makeup routine. The clear veil sets color in place to prevent melting, creasing, and fading. A tester said, "For once, my makeup stayed intact all day."
TO BUY: $13 at drugstores.

3 BEST PRIMER
Physicians Formula Argan Wear 2-in-1 Primer
Before makeup, prep skin with this argan-oil and coconut-water primer. It creates a silky base so that "foundation goes on smoothly—and lasts," said a tester. You can also rub it on arms and legs for a subtle sheen.
TO BUY: $15 at drugstores.

4 BEST FOR OILY SKIN
Ole Henriksen Grease Relief Facial Water
No more slick summer skin—eucalyptus, camphor, and lactic acid help clear pores, while witch hazel reduces shine. Douse a cotton ball, then sweep it over clean skin or mist it on post-workout to help prevent breakouts.
TO BUY: $22, sephora.com.

5 MOST ECO-FRIENDLY
Jane Iredale Balance Hydration Spray
Wake up dull, tired skin with this zesty, 100 percent natural spray. A trio of orange-peel, grapefruit-peel, and green tea–leaf extracts makes for a "midday pick-me-up," said a tester. Keep it on your desk, and spray when sleepy or stressed.
TO BUY: $29, janeiredale.com.

6 BEST FOR DRY SKIN
Pixi Beauty Hydrating Milky Mist
Putting on face cream is the last thing you want to do when it's humid out. Instead, opt for this spritzer spiked with hyaluronic acid and glycerin. It offers a major moisture surge without feeling heavy or sticky.
TO BUY: $15, target.com.

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ON NANTUCKET

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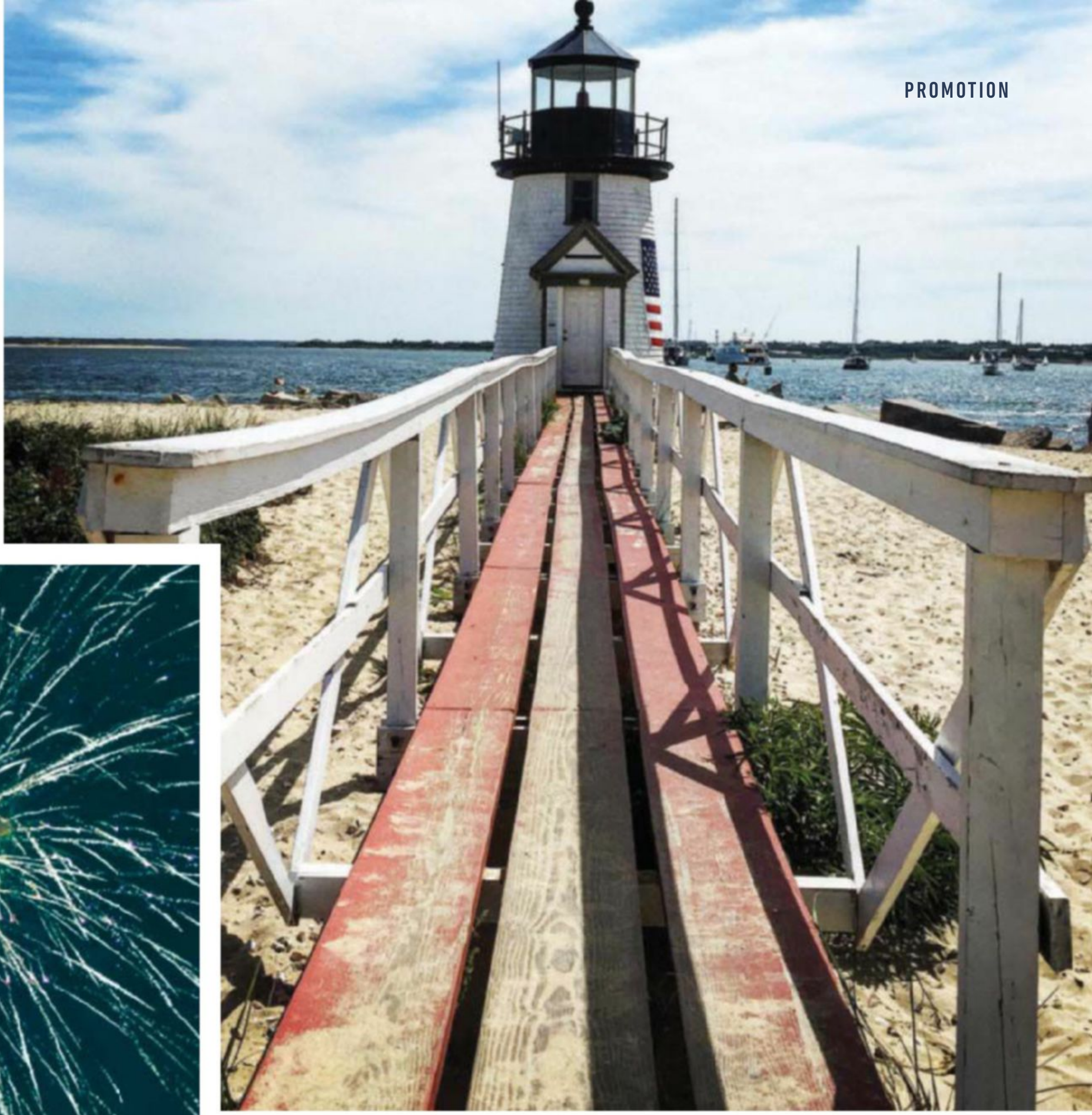

20TH ANNUAL

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8.13.16

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Written by Sarah Grossbart

Photograph by Urosh Petrovic

GETTY IMAGES

Q.
Rabbit residence

We have a two-month-old bunny. How big should his cage be, and how much exercise should he get every day?

W. R., via Facebook

A. Your rabbit needs room to do the bunny hop. A starter cage (about 40 inches wide, 20 inches long, and two feet high) should be fine for this stage. But in a month or so, when he'll probably weigh about three pounds, you'll be better off with a cage that is at least four times his length when he's stretched out. "The new pen should be at least 42 inches high," says veterinarian Jennifer L. Saver. (MidWest E-Coat Exercise Pen, from $45, petflow.com.) Add an activity or two that encourage movement, like the Timothy Tunnel ($13, busybunny.com), but keep them minimal to avoid crowding. Your rabbit will naturally jump around for much of the day. (It's a good idea to cushion the floor with carpet scraps.) But you can also help him to stay healthy by upping his exercise: Plan on two or three hours of nightly cage-free time to roam the house.

Q.
Canine comfort

The older of my two dogs died, and the younger one was very attached to him. Are there ways we can help him "grieve" (if pets do that), other than giving him more attention or a new dog?

K. V., via Facebook

A. It's common for a dog who has lost a companion to show signs of mourning, such as clinginess or loss of appetite. But if the decreased appetite lasts more than four days, it's best to see a vet as a precaution. Generally, extra attention and a new pal can help him cope, but rushing out for a replacement pup isn't the only answer, says veterinarian Mary Gardner. You might try giving your dog something new to focus on, like an agility course or service-dog training, says veterinarian Gayle O'Konski. Scents can soothe, too: Leave the older dog's collar out so your pup can sniff it and be comforted by the familiar smell, says Gardner. Or replace his own collar with one containing antianxiety pheromones (Adaptil collar, from $25, adaptil.com for info). If your pup is alone during the day, have a walker take him out midday for a boost. Typically, in about six weeks, his tail should be wagging again.

Q.
Yelp help

Our dog sometimes lunges at our newborn when he is crying or when we pick him up. Any advice?

K. J. R., via Facebook

A. The baby's wails aren't music to your pet's ears. "Your dog is probably displaying fearful or anxious behavior because he's stressed by the new stimuli," says animal-behavior consultant Michael Shikashio. Left untreated, the issue can escalate to biting, so it's a good idea to meet with your vet, who can observe your pet and suggest a treatment plan, says veterinarian Donna Solomon. It may include a technique called counterconditioning: While the baby is crying, you toss a series of small treats to the dog. After repeating this routinely over time, he will associate the crying sound with a positive reward and back off. An alternate suggestion may be moving the dog to his own space—with a bed and toys—when the baby is awake, says veterinarian Jim Lowe: "Relocating him to that retreat will help him feel safe and gradually acclimate."

Q.
Feline diet debate

Which type of food is best for my cat—wet or dry?

S. S., via Facebook

A. Owners who serve wet food tend to view this as pampering the cat (akin to a can of tuna), but some felines are better off with dry food, because it generally has more protein and less fat per serving, says O'Konski. When you can, opt for a brand that lists a protein (like chicken or fish) as the first ingredient and has a label indicating approval by the Association of American Feed Control Officials. The downside of dry food is that it's less hydrating, says veterinarian Marty Becker, so set up a fountain with running water (Petmate Fresh Flow pet fountain, $42, amazon.com), which will entice your cat to drink more.

THE PET EXPERTS

MARTY BECKER, D.V.M., North Idaho Animal Hospital, Sandpoint, Idaho.

MARY GARDNER, D.V.M., Lap of Love Veterinary Hospice, Los Angeles.

JIM LOWE, D.V.M., technical services veterinarian at Tomlyn USA.

GAYLE O'KONSKI, D.V.M., Morris Animal Hospital, Granger, Indiana.

JENNIFER L. SAVER, D.V.M., Catnip & Carrots Veterinary Hospital, New Hyde Park, New York.

MICHAEL SHIKASHIO, president of the International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants.

DONNA SOLOMON, D.V.M., Animal Medical Center of Chicago.

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LOVE (OR AT LEAST STOP HATING) THY NEIGHBOR

Live next door to a privacy invader, a partyer, a junk collector? Your frustration ends now, with this nip-it-in-the-bud guide.

Written by Erin Zammett Ruddy
Illustrations by Mouni Feddag

ever

pull into your driveway, see your neighbor walking to his car, and pretend to check your phone so you don't have to chat? Instead, smile, wave, and make a quick exit, say the experts. That three-second gesture creates goodwill, which comes in handy when you're forced to interact—whether you need a favor or have a dispute. "It's always easier to resolve issues when you have an ongoing relationship," says psychologist Dan Christie, Ph.D., a conflict-resolution specialist. With that friendly foundation established, try these strategies for addressing common conflicts.

YOU'VE GOT NO PRIVACY

You want to have a cup of coffee on your deck, but—*Oh, hi*—there's your neighbor 10 feet away, pruning his roses again.

ACTION PLAN: You can control only what happens on your side of the fence, says Whitney LaCosta, a New York real estate broker. No fence? Put one up. Or plant shrubs or trees, or at least position some pots, to obscure the view. This is the only way to get the solitude that you want. If you plan to put up a fence, talk with the neighbors about when and where it's going. Refer to your survey and theirs (the maps delineating your lots' boundaries) before putting anything along the property line.

SAMPLE SCRIPT: "Hey, I wanted to give you a heads-up that we're putting in a fence. You must be tired of seeing me out here every day! We're getting an estimate soon, so we should both go over our surveys together to be clear on the property line."

WHAT SURVEY? Yours is probably stored with your home's closing papers. If not, try city hall. Many towns keep them on file.

THEY USE YOUR CURB AS A PARKING LOT

They leave their cars in front of your house, while their driveway remains inexplicably clear.

ACTION PLAN: Separate the problem from your neighbor. He isn't the issue; the parking situation is. Then you can approach it as though you're on the same team. "Parties with the most success in conflict resolution have a collaborative attitude," says Christie. Because many towns allow parking anywhere on a public street, there's probably no legal infraction here, so your best bet is to couch it as a safety issue.

SAMPLE SCRIPT: "Hey! You couldn't have known this, but when I'm backing down my driveway, I can't see up the street because of where the cars are parked. Do you think you could park in front of your house instead, and keep that part of the street clear?"

THE EXPERTS

BOB BORZOTTA, author of *Neighbors From Hell* and founder of neighborsfromhell.com.

DAN CHRISTIE, PH.D., psychologist, professor emeritus at Ohio State University, and Fulbright scholar in conflict resolution.

DIANE GOTTSMAN, etiquette expert and owner of the Protocol School of Texas.

LINA GUILLEN, attorney and coauthor of *Neighbor Law: Fences, Trees, Boundaries & Noise.*

WHITNEY LACOSTA, real estate broker and owner of Coach Realty, on Long Island, in New York.

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It feels like you live next to a frat house

Too much noise! The neighbors blast music, let their dog howl, and mow the lawn at the crack of dawn.

ACTION PLAN: Legally speaking, "you can take them to court if the noise is enough of a nuisance that it interferes with your ability to enjoy your property or if it violates local laws regarding noise hours and decibel levels," says attorney Lina Guillen. But ideally you can skip this if you talk to them in the right way at the right time. "Don't go over there screaming at 2 A.M. in your slippers. Wait until the next day, keep calm, and avoid the word *you,*" says Christie. "It feels accusatory and invites them to play the blame game, which may make both sides unwilling to budge." Come at it from the assumption that they didn't even realize their noise was affecting you (even if you're pretty sure that they did). If all else fails and they don't budge, you can send a certified letter (that can later be shown in court) describing how the noise affects your life, with copies of ordinances that they may be breaking. Sign off with "Please response by X date so we can fix this." But hopefully a simple(r) conversation will do the trick.

SAMPLE SCRIPT: "Hi! I'm sure you didn't realize this, but our walls are thin and we hear your music late at night, so it's hard to sleep. Could you turn it down after, say, 9 P.M.?"

KEEP A LOG
Court is a last resort, but in case you end up there, start documenting the noisy infractions and recording them with your phone.

YOU GET NONSTOP POP-INS

The kids next door—and sometimes their parents—repeatedly drop by with zero notice. You sit down for dinner, for homework help, or just for the sake of sitting down, and the doorbell rings.

ACTION PLAN: Send a message by not inviting them in when they show up. It sounds harsh, but there are ways to do this gracefully. (See Sample Scripts.) "Unless you want to be a pushover, you need to stay true to what works for you and your family. The neighbors will get over it," says etiquette authority Diane Gottsman.

SAMPLE SCRIPTS:

IF THE PARENTS SHOW UP... "Hi! I would invite you guys in, but we have a bunch of things to get done before dinner—homework, ugh, *amiright?* Let's catch up another time soon!"

IF THE KID SHOWS UP... "Hi, sweetie. Alex can't play today, but we'll figure out another time for you guys to hang out."

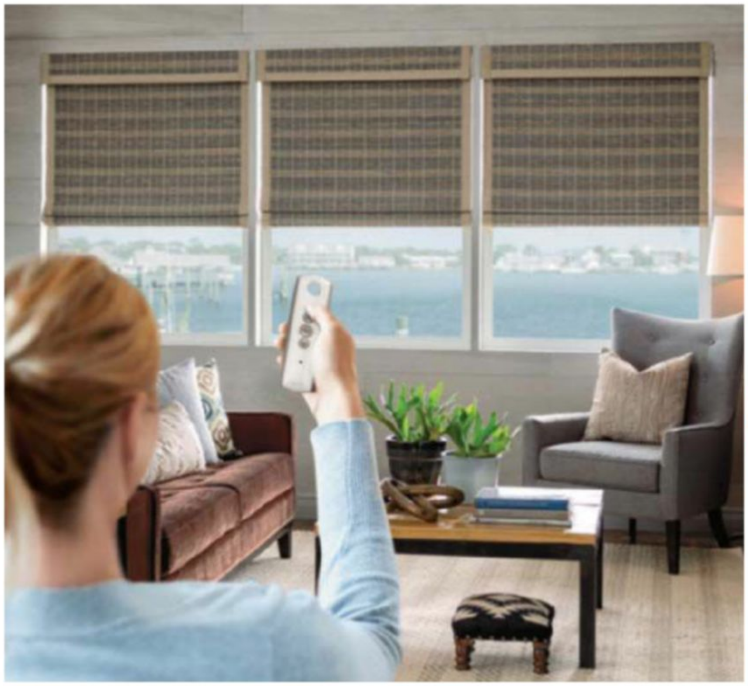
EXTRA CREDIT FOR TEXTING THE MOM THIS:
"It was so nice of Jordan to stop by, but weeknights are tricky. Can we make a plan for the weekend?"

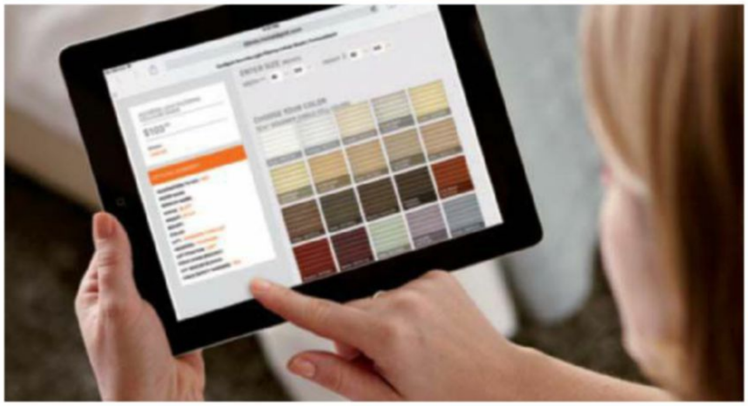
THEIR HOLIDAY DECORATIONS STAY UP TOO LONG

It's March, and the tiny Christmas lights are still twinkling.

ACTION PLAN: Understand that unless there's a home owners' association rule pertaining to them, lingering holiday decorations are not something that you can be adamant about, says Gottsman. You could offer to help take down the lights when you're out, say, cleaning your gutters, but keep in mind that this will probably be taken as an insult. So you may want to let the blinking lights lie. That said, if you have a chummy relationship, there's a chance you can get away with nudging if you deliver it in a jokey way.

SAMPLE SCRIPT: "Hey! Getting a head start on next Christmas? Ha. But seriously, Alison, any chance of those lights coming down?"





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Their house looks run-down

Your neighbors have let it go, but *you* can't.

ACTION PLAN: Step back and try to understand what they might be going through. If it's really run-down, it may mean that they're not in good financial shape. "Very few bad neighbors are trying to be bad neighbors," says Bob Borzotta, a neighbor-issue consultant and author. Still, the peeling paint/crumbling roof/unkempt lawn could make your insurance rates go up and your house's value go down. You can check your town's upkeep laws and even make an anonymous call to the town department of inspections or code enforcement to step in and carry out the rules. Or, if the neighbors are elderly or infirm, you could send your kids over to offer their services if the issue requires a nontechnical fix, like raking leaves. Another alternative: Play the friendly-neighbor role and find a clever way to turn your fixation on this grievance into "just being helpful." **SAMPLE SCRIPT:** "I got a great rate on a roof repair from my guy. My house really needed it. He's giving a neighborhood discount that you might be interested in. Do you want me to send him over?"

WHEN TO HOLD YOUR TONGUE
Not all conflicts warrant a confrontation. Find out when to let it go at realsimple.com/etiquette.

STAY STRONG
You may feel guilty fending off someone trying to connect. Don't. You have a right to set limits.

THE BLOCK GOSSIP ALWAYS CORNERS YOU

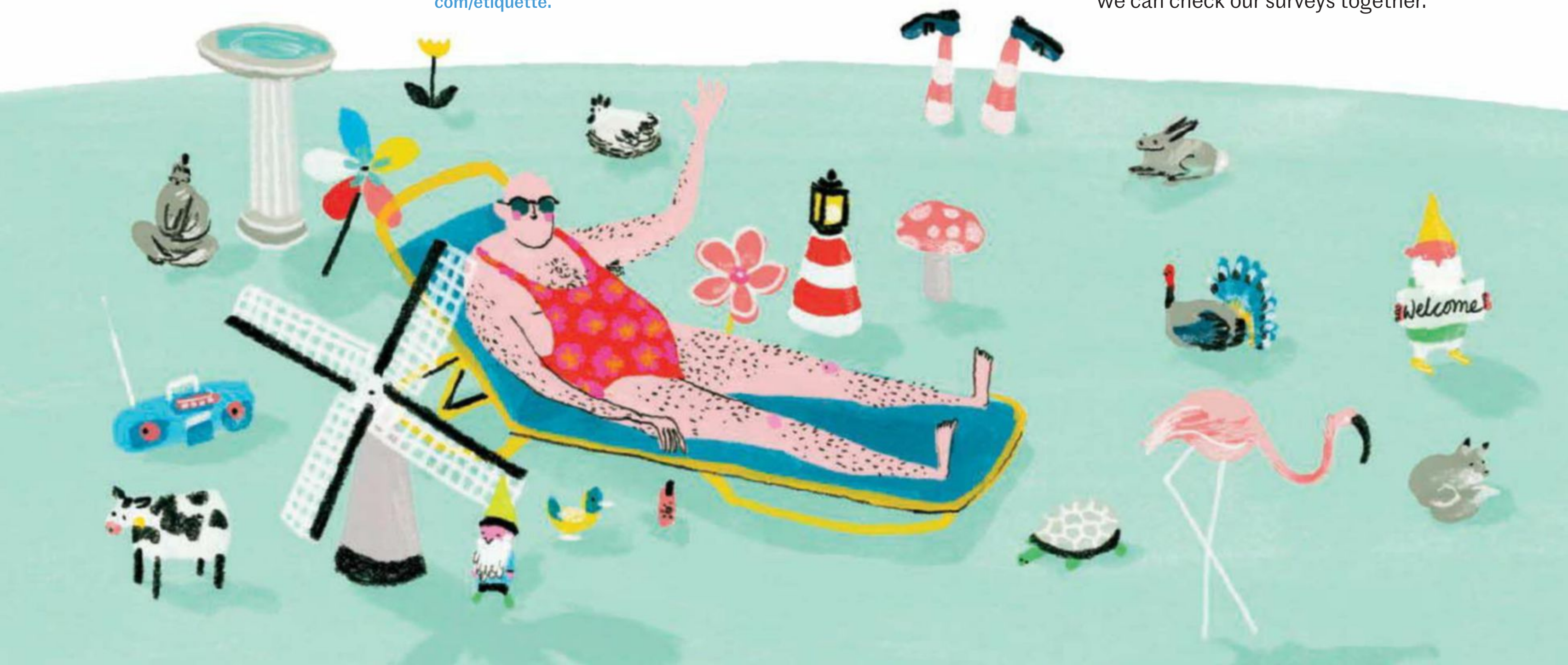
Your neighbor is like the office busybody, only instead of ambushing you at the elevator, she does it in your driveway.

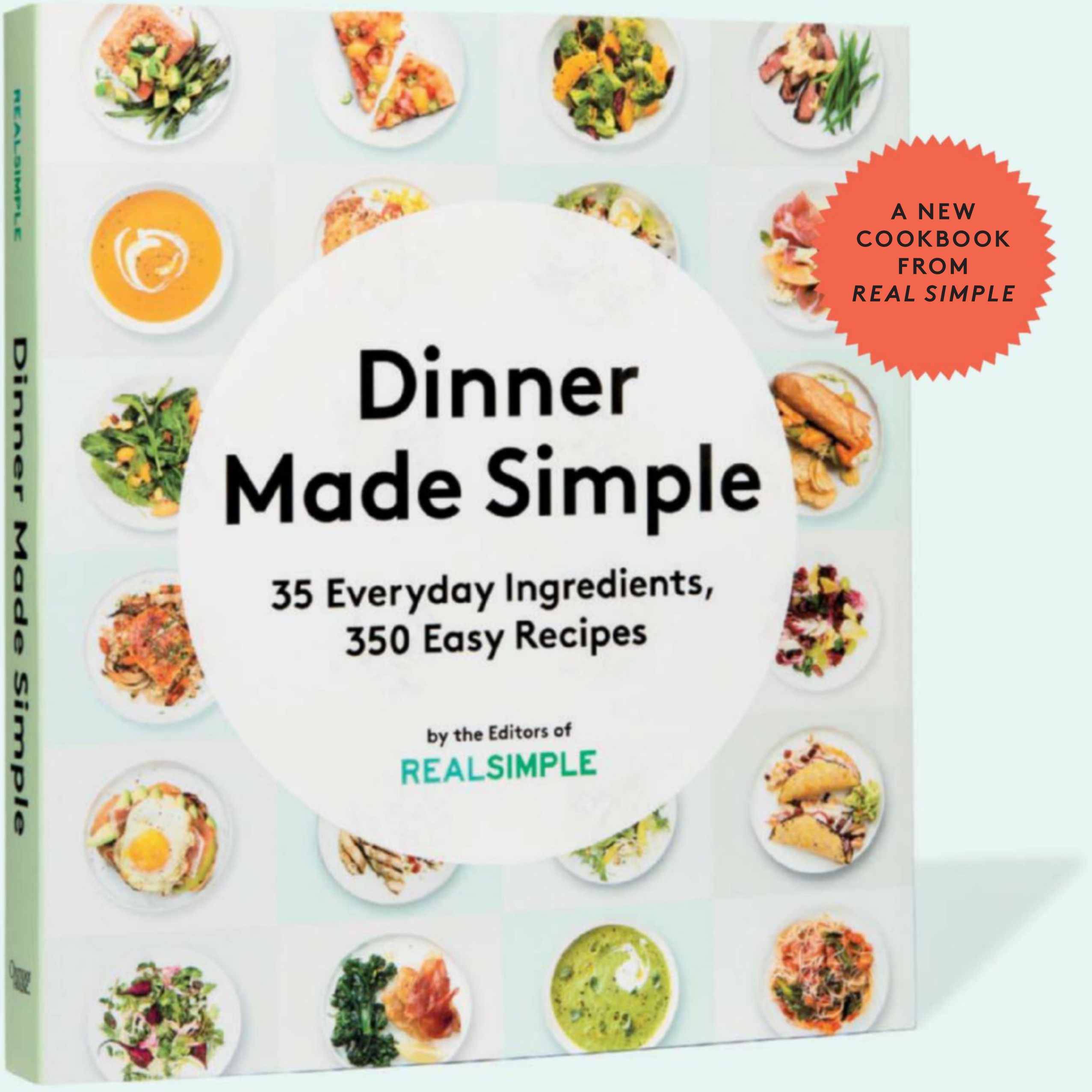
ACTION PLAN: Turn her into a "Nice to see you! Gotta run!" kind of neighbor, says Gottsman. "The next time she approaches, let your body language show her that you're not taking the bait. Look her in the eye, say hi, then drop your gaze to focus on your phone or your hedges—or simply walk toward your front door with zeal so she gets the sense that you're not up for gossip." Once she realizes that you're no fun, she'll knock on someone else's door.
SAMPLE SCRIPT: "Thanks for the info, but I like to stay out of the fray. I'm sure you understand." Repeat each time until she gets the point.

THEY'RE HOGGING YOUR SPACE

The next-door neighbors are encroaching on your property. It could be a shed; it could be a fence; it could be a patch of ivy. But it can't be on your side of the line.

ACTION PLAN: Make sure that you have an up-to-date survey that specifies where your property ends and theirs begins, says LaCosta. Then consider the extent of the encroachment and whether a request for, say, a new fence or landscaping changes is worthwhile. This is a risky ask: A fix may be costly for them, and if they don't agree to it and you need to threaten legal action, you might not be able to handle the fees and the time involved in a court case. Unless the infringement is significant, you will probably be better off overlooking it. But you can still diplomatically bring it up to avoid future issues. Start with a compliment, then play the situation as if you were clueless. **SAMPLE SCRIPT:** "I love your shed—we were thinking of getting one, too. And when we looked at the survey, we found out that your shed is partly on our property. We didn't know this, either. I'm just telling you so that the next time either of us builds or plants, we can check our surveys together."





YOUR FAVORITE INGREDIENTS, DELICIOUSLY REIMAGINED

10 inventive recipes for every family staple, from apples to zucchini

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BUY IT, SELL IT

Whether you're seeking treasure or just unloading it, there's a furniture resale site for you. *Real Simple* uncovers the pros and cons of the top five.

Written by Emily Hsieh and Nicole Sforza

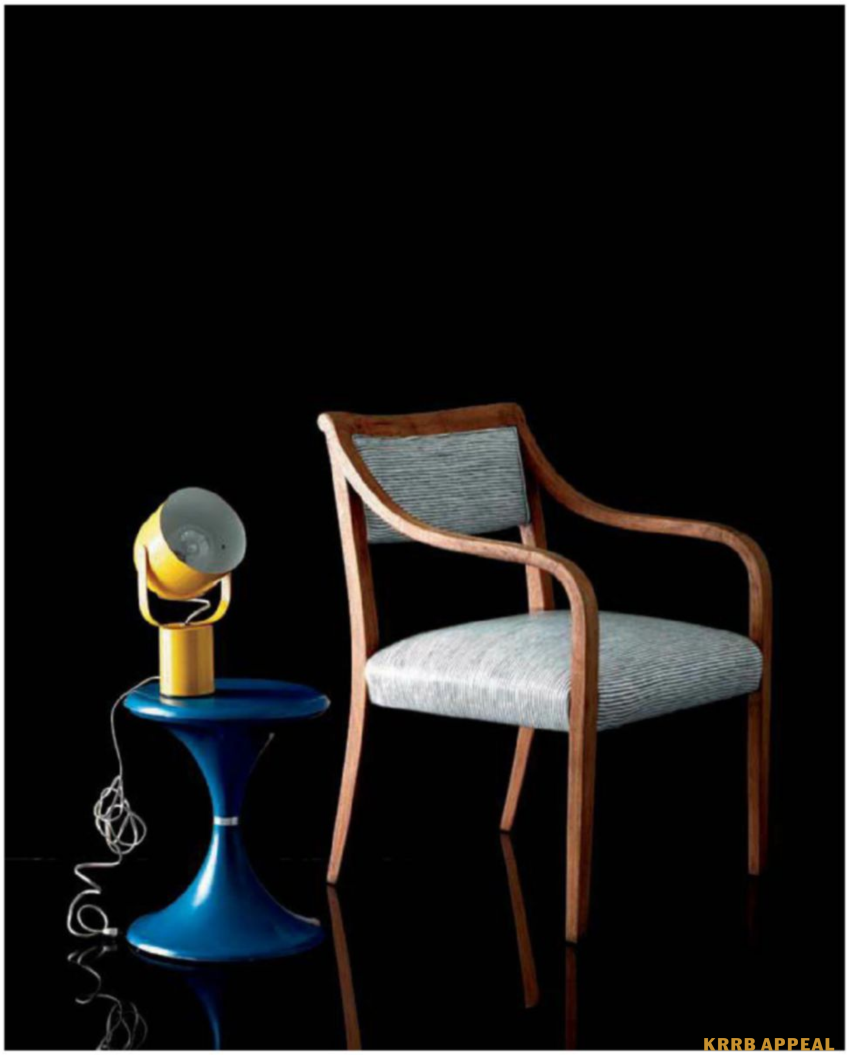
Photographs by Johnny Miller

PROP STYLING BY OLGA NAIMAN

THE DESIGNERS' STANDBY

CHAIRISH

IN A NUTSHELL: Find a trove of furnishings of all types, from all eras, with a plucked-from-a-home-magazine style. Think Victorian settees, Lucite bar carts, velvet headboards. "It's the go-to site for beautiful pieces that designers buy but don't end up using," says designer Amber Lewis. The site's discerning product criteria (high style? great condition? good value? check, check, check) ensures that you're not scrolling through pages of junk.
HOW TO BUY: Filter by city first to see what's available via free local pickup. When you're ready to buy, click the Make an Offer button to try to get a lower price. "If you offer 10 percent below the list price, you'll nearly always get it," says designer Emily Henderson. A full range of payment options (credit and debit cards, PayPal) is available.
HOW TO SELL: To help determine what something is worth, refer to the Chairish Pink Book, which serves as a go-to online pricing resource for vintage furnishings. Snap up to six photos of your item at different angles and Chairish will white out the background of the primary shot for your listing. The Chairish app (free, iTunes.com) makes selling a cinch, too.
FEES: Chairish takes a 20 percent commission on sales up to $2,500, and 3 percent to 12 percent for bigger-ticket items, depending on the sale price. Many sellers cover the shipping on small items that can be shipped via UPS ($9.99 to $29.99). Buyers pay for big and bulky items that require white-glove service (arranged via Chairish; average cost: $299).
GOOD TO KNOW: This isn't the place to find a steal. "Chairish is highly curated—it's geared toward design lovers," says designer Nicole Gibbons. "You won't find many fixer-uppers, and the prices reflect that." Check back often, as 150 to 250 new items are added daily. If you're looking for something specific, like a midcentury swivel chair, use the "saved search" feature, which sends an e-mail alert every time one shows up in the inventory.



KRRB APPEAL
If you are already selling items on Etsy or eBay, you can add a Krrb It button to your bookmarks bar to automatically create a Krrb listing for that item. There's also an option to autopublish your listings to Facebook and Twitter.

THE VIRTUAL STOOP SALE

KRRB

IN A NUTSHELL: Pronounced "curb," this sleek-looking site and app (free, iTunes.com) offers an easy-to-navigate virtual showroom for vintage, secondhand, and handmade wares for sale in your hood. It's all about being neighborly here. There's a detailed ratings system for shoppers and sellers, and software is used to detect scammers.
HOW TO BUY: Type in your address, or set your location on a map to see what's nearby, then use a slider to expand out—to "nearby" (1 mile) to "bike ride" (5 miles) to "road trip" (50 miles). A gridded photo display makes it easy to survey the goods. Cash payments are handled between buyer and seller; credit- or debit-card transactions are doable through the site.
HOW TO SELL: Sign up to create a "corner" (a listing) with your profile pic, location, and social-media links. In your profile, buyers can see how long it takes you to respond, how many new listings you have, and when you joined.
FEES: Krrb uses a credit system. One listing costs one credit (40 cents to $1, depending on how many you buy). But you can also get free credits: 10 for signing up, 50 for creating a Krrb board on Pinterest, and more. The seller pays a 10 percent fee for credit- or debit-card transactions. Most items are picked up; any shipping costs are negotiated between buyer and seller.
GOOD TO KNOW: You can direct-message the seller to ask for a discount. Look for an uptick in deals at the beginning and the end of the month, when people are moving and more desperate to unload.

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THE GLOBAL GO-TO

ETSY

IN A NUTSHELL: One-of-a-kind goods from around the world, often handmade, are what you can bet on here. "Whether you're looking for a brass tray or a vintage trash pail, you'll probably find it—and it won't be run-of-the-mill," says Lewis. Sellers are passionate about their items, too. "I've gotten handwritten notes from sellers asking me to send photos of the piece I bought in its new home," says designer Jasmin Reese.
HOW TO BUY: Search by category, trending items, or recommendations based on stuff you've looked at in the past. Use the Favorites tool to keep track of what you love and organize it by category. For in-person interaction, try the Etsy Local tool on the site, which lists events and shops that stock Etsy designers by city. Pay directly on the site using a credit or debit card, PayPal, or an Etsy gift card.
HOW TO SELL: You become a "shop owner" to peddle your wares. Etsy is serious about its mission: Everything must be handmade or vintage (at least 20 years old) or fall into the craft-supplies category. Etsy's shipping services allow you to purchase and print out U.S. Postal Service and FedEx shipping labels at home, with savings of up to 30 percent.
FEES: Setting up shop is free; listings cost 20 cents each, and Etsy takes 3.5 percent of sales. The buyer typically pays for shipping for both purchases and returns.
GOOD TO KNOW: It may not be cost-effective to buy large pieces on Etsy. ("The barn door I recently bought was an expensive hassle to ship," says Reese.) But the site is a veritable gold mine for accents, from pottery to pillow covers to lighting. "I've found gorgeous pieces from all over the world for a fraction of the prices at flea markets," says Reese.

THE SURE THING FOR EVERYTHING

CRAIGSLIST

IN A NUTSHELL: This is where you go to find everything and the kitchen sink—literally. (A recent search of "kitchen sink" in Los Angeles yielded 967 listings.) The downside is having to dig through pages of stuff that can feel more trash than treasure—but those massive numbers of users and products can also mean big payoffs. "I've scored midcentury credenzas for $150 that would go for $1,200 at a nice vintage store," says Henderson.
HOW TO BUY: Whittle down your options by using quotes in the search field ("lacquer console"). The gallery view lets you filter results efficiently, giving visuals of each item without your having to click. Payment—cash, check, or PayPal—is handled between buyer and seller.
HOW TO SELL: Once you create a post, it goes live within 15 minutes. It's OK if your item has seen better days. Just be up front about any flaws in your description. (There are lots of buyers who don't consider "mint condition" a must, but no one likes to feel misled.) A bonus of Craigslist is that with its more than 60 million monthly users, you can typically expect swift results. "I've sold many things over the years, and every time, I've gotten rid of them within a week," says Gibbons. You can repost every 48 hours—any sooner and the site may block your post.
FEES: Postings are free; no commission. Buyers and sellers make pickup or delivery arrangements between themselves.
GOOD TO KNOW: This is the place to land an epic deal. Craigslisters generally want to sell fast, so they're more open to negotiation than sellers on other sites are. When shopping around, use alternate search terms. In Craigslist world, a couch is a sofa is a love seat. And don't forget to include misspellings. "If I'm looking for a dining table, I'll always search for 'dinning table,' too," says Henderson. As a seller, you may deal with no-shows. (There are no ramifications for that.) And because you're meeting strangers, it's a good idea to solicit a friend to be with you during a transaction.

DEAL MAKER
Found something that you love on Craigslist? In your note to the seller, emphasize expediency. ("I can pick it up tonight!") E-mails that make a seller confident in a sale are more likely to get a response.

HE FIGHTS DIRTY *no matter how dirty* DIRTY IS.

NO MATTER WHERE THEY ARE, TOUGH MESSES DON'T STAND A CHANCE WHEN MR. CLEAN'S MAGIC ERASER IS PART OF YOUR CLEAN ROUTINE.

WHEN IT COMES TO CLEAN THERE'S ONLY ONE Mr.

Wet before use. A rinse is required for surfaces that come in direct contact with food. Use as directed.

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THE NO-HASSLE HUB FOR CITY DWELLERS

APTDECO

IN A NUTSHELL: This online marketplace offers secondhand furniture exclusively. Antiques and midcentury finds mix with modern pieces from retail stores (West Elm, Restoration Hardware). You can have an item shipped for a fee, but most transactions go through the site's low-cost shipping service in the New York City and Washington, D.C., areas. The service is rolling out to more cities this year, including Philadelphia and Baltimore.

HOW TO BUY: Sift by style, item type, trend, or room, or search for something specific. Negotiating isn't encouraged. AptDeco advises sellers on fair-market pricing before they list. But you can message the seller to see if there's wiggle room. Once you buy, use the delivery calendar to specify a desired date and time. A delivery rep will text you 45 minutes prior to arrival, and you can track the item via an Uber-like interface.

HOW TO SELL: It takes minutes to create a post. Snap a few photos, fill out a description, and set your price. Within 24 hours of submitting it, you'll receive notification approving you to post. (AptDeco proofreads descriptions and edits images.) Items typically sell within 10 days. Once the sale is a go, you're pinged with the requested delivery date so you can select a pickup time.

FEES: Listings are free; sellers pay a 23 percent commission for all items sold. Free local pickup can be arranged between buyer and seller. If AptDeco's delivery service is used (from $35 for a small piece, like an ottoman or a side table), the buyer picks up the tab.

GOOD TO KNOW: Items are added every hour of every day—incentive to check back often. AptDeco partners with stores like BoConcept New York to sell (new) floor models and off-season items at hefty discounts. If an item wasn't as described, you can return it within 24 hours of receiving it. A delivery person will retrieve it to return it to the seller, at the seller's expense. Have a change of heart? Resell it through AptDeco and it will waive the commission.

THE FURNITURE-CONSIGNMENT EXPERTS

NICOLE GIBBONS, New York City–based interior designer and founder of the lifestyle blog sohautestyle.com.

EMILY HENDERSON, Los Angeles–based interior designer.

AMBER LEWIS, Los Angeles–based interior designer.

JASMIN REESE, Chicago-based interior designer.

PREFER TO BUY NEW? Find *Real Simple*'s curated list of the 18 best sites to buy furniture at realsimple.com/shoppingguide.

STANK FACE
PURINA
TIDY CATS
brand Cat Litter
TIDY FACE
GUARANTEED
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Protection
LOCKS AWAY ODORS
NEW & IMPROVED FORMULA
Suffering from Stank Face? Tidy Cats® has the cure.
It's new and improved with Guaranteed TidyLock™ Protection that locks away odors.
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Ask the Organizer

Baby-gear gridlock

Every time we go out, we bring half the house with us (diapers, clothes, bottles) and lug it back. Help!

E. B., via Facebook

You do need these essentials, but to cut down on quantities, keep a packed to-go tote by the front door. Stick to one outfit per kid and small amounts—a resealable plastic bag of wipes, not the jumbo pack. When the dirty outfit is washed, it goes back in. At the end of an outing, you'll probably want to drop the bag, get the kids in the bath, and be done for the day. Push against that. Taking a few minutes to restock will give you the freedom later to get out the door fast, without the stress of rushing and cramming stuff in.

Stack mentality

I have a habit of cluttering up my nightstand with books, magazines, receipts, pens, paper scraps, and mugs. What's the fix?

A. E. M., via Facebook

When a nightstand becomes a default home for odds and ends, you have to look at clutter constantly, which can compromise your serenity. It takes some retraining to stop the dropping habit. Start thinking of your nightstand surface as a spot for of-the-moment needs only: the book you're currently reading, the mug you're drinking from, a pen and a pad for jotting a note if you wake up in the middle of the night. Move mugs you're done with to the kitchen, magazines to the living room, and receipts to wherever you read mail and pay bills. Of course, you'll always be tempted to drop something and deal with it later—just know that this is a slippery slope. "Later" is a lie you tell to let yourself off the hook. Get back on track with this reminder: It always takes less time to put away one thing in the moment than it does to have to find homes for a pile of things later.

Canine clutter

I need a smarter setup for pet stuff: leashes, treats, dog food, pet-waste bags.

J. C., via Facebook

Ideally you should be able to grab your dog-walking gear quickly and go, so it makes sense to leave the leash and the waste bags wherever you keep your keys—say, on a hook or a shelf by the door or in the coat closet. Pet food stays neater if you create a zone for it in the pantry. Keep treats in an open basket on a high shelf and bulk food below in a big container that's wide enough to get a scoop in and out (Gamma2 Vittles Vault, $20, amazon.com). Toys can take over if they don't have a home, so set a metal bowl or a straw basket in a corner of each room where you play with your dog.

Illustrations by The Ellaphant in the Room

ASK THE ORGANIZER

Kitchen fix

What's the best food-storage plan when you have no pantry and a husband who loves Costco?

J. T., via Facebook

First address the bulk buying by asking (or reminding) your husband to be judicious. You can say, "Space is tight, so we need to be discerning. A five-pound bag of coffee makes sense because we drink it every morning, but a 10-pound bag of rice doesn't." Then you can focus on carving out room in your cabinets. Boxed items are filled with air, so you can fit more of those products on shelves if you decant into sealable square canisters. To open up more space for food, move mixing bowls, measuring cups, and other kitchen tools off the shelves and into a cart that can act as a food-prep zone. Last, collect loose items—tea bags, snack packs—in clear, stackable bins to keep them from cluttering up your space.

GOT A QUESTION? Submit it at realsimple.com/organizing.

Moving violations

We're moving soon, and I can't seem to get all the packing done. Any tips?

A. P., via Facebook

Moving is a tremendous opportunity to declutter, because you inevitably touch everything that you own. You don't want to blow it by packing items that you're going to get rid of in the new house.

To get over the emotional hurdle, take a quick pass at pulling out obvious items that don't need to leave with you and that can be tossed or given away: old or worn-out sports gear, tech items, and books, for example. After scraping that off the top, you may be looking at two-thirds or half of what you thought you had to pack. Next, quantify your packing time. Work backward from your end date, scheduling manageable blocks for packing—and mark them on your calendar and set a timer. That way, your objective isn't a huge one (completing a move) but a smaller one (packing for three hours). The finishing point allows you to feel successful.

If you're three weeks out (or less), consider yourself down to the wire. Stop thinking about living in your home and begin thinking of it as "camping" there. Set aside a week's worth of clothes and essentials for each family member, and look at the rest as fair game. Your house is now a work zone to get it all boxed up.

AN EXPERT ON ORDER, NEW YORK CITY–BASED PRO ANDREW MELLEN SOLVES YOUR TOUGHEST DECLUTTERING DILEMMAS.

PORTRAIT BY SARAH MAYCOCK

Work time,
meeting time,
pickup time.
Play time.
With everything you need in one shared place,
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Shared Family Calendar
Shopping & To Do Lists
Meals & Recipe Box
Get Cozi. The #1 family organizing app, available in the App Store.
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DISCOVER YOUR STYLE
Experience Incredible Savings and Head-Turning Style
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H&M WHITE HOUSE BLACK MARKET DKNY ANN TAYLOR FACTORY STORE UNDER ARMOUR AND HUNDREDS MORE DESIGNER OUTLETS
TangerOutlets
TANGEROUTLETS.COM

STYLE WISE

Make quick work of getting dressed. These nine pieces add up to endless office-ready outfits that are easy on your morning routine—and your wallet.

Written by Rebecca Daly
Photographs by Edwin Tse

EVERY ITEM $100 OR LESS!

HAIR BY OSMANE DA CUNHA USING KÉRASTASE PARIS L'ORÉAL; MAKEUP BY ADALIZ AT BEAUTYBYA.COM

The key pieces

Photographs by
Philip Friedman

1
$60
H&M BLAZER
TO BUY: hm.com.

2
$100
CALVIN KLEIN TOTE
TO BUY: Marshalls stores.

3
$98
ANTONIO MELANI PUMPS
TO BUY: dillards.com.

4
$100
THE LIMITED DRESS
TO BUY: thelimited.com.

5
$42
ENTOURAGE JUMPSUIT
TO BUY: shopentourage clothing.com.

6
$90
MASSIMO DUTTI TOP
TO BUY: massimo dutti.com.

7
$79
GUESS BLOUSE
TO BUY: shop.guess.com.

8
$70
ZARA SKIRT
TO BUY: zara.com.

9
$65
ALDO SHOES
TO BUY: aldoshoes.com.

SOFT STYLING BY MAI TRAN

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Find these in your grocer's chilled section.

Crafted for home

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FINE PRINT

Wear this patterned blazer anywhere you would wear a basic black one. The subtle design adds some style impact without taking over entirely.

THIS PAGE
Poverty Flats earrings
TO BUY: $34, povertyflatsbyrian.com.
Stella & Dot necklace
TO BUY: $69, stelladot.com.

OPENING PAGE
White House Black Market belt
TO BUY: $68, whbm.com (shown on page 101).

DETAILS, DETAILS

You'll get a free pass on a repeat of this skirt-and-shirt combo (also shown on page 101) if you cleverly switch up the accessories, like adding the detachable collar bow (as seen here) or a statement-making belt (shown on page 101).

Guilt free.
Unless you steal one.

20 grams of protein. 0 grams of sugar. 0 guilt. **think**Thin. **think**Positive.™

Look for us in the energy bar aisle.

STRONG SUIT

With classic work-wear attributes—in this case, an office-appropriate navy shade and cigarette pant legs—a jumpsuit is a modern, more stylish alternative to matchy-matchy separates. (And did we mention it's a one-step instant outfit?)

GET THE JUMP on weekday A.M.'s with an efficiently organized closet. See how at realsimple.com/closethacks.

KEEP THAT
"JUST SHOWERED"
FEELING
ALL DAY
EVERY DAY
WITH ALWAYS
DAILIES LINERS.
Stay fresh day after day after day with these thin, flexible liners. Try it for a week, and feel the difference for yourself.
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COLOR ANALYSIS

A mix-and-match work wardrobe doesn't have to be all neutral. Sticking to simple silhouettes (a traditional sheath dress) means you can get away with unexpected hues, like this pretty burnt orange.

THE ART OF LAYERING

When temperatures start to dip in the fall, add some sleeves. The white shirt turns this sleek jumpsuit into a borrowed-from-the-boys, vest-inspired ensemble. Pared-back heels keep it flatteringly feminine.

Poverty Flats bracelet
TO BUY: $42, povertyflatsbyrian.com.

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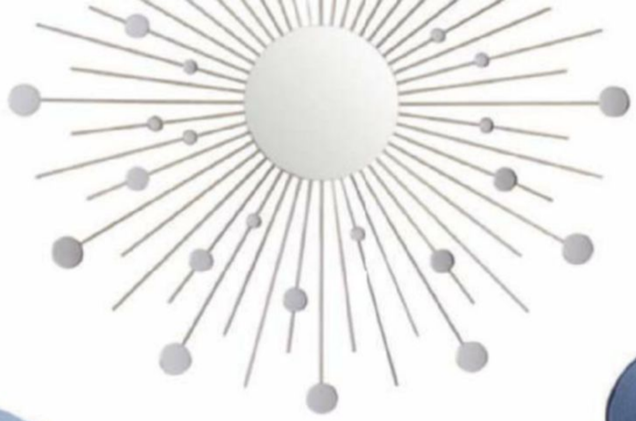
DEVELOP YOUR PALETTE

A range of complementary colors will help you make the most of your wardrobe—with the least amount of effort. Don't obsess over matchy-matchy; just keep shades in the same relative family.

PROMOTION

A.



B.

C.

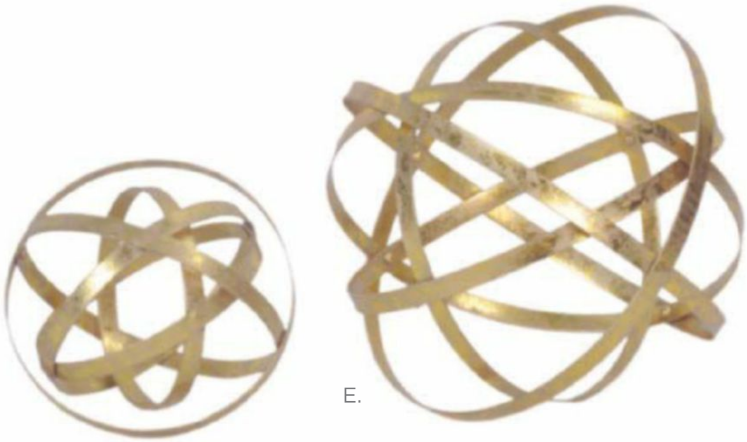
D.

G.

Maximize Your Style

Now through August 31: Save BIG on small-space furniture, decor, and more at **wayfair.com/RealSimpleDeals.**

F.



E.

H.

A. Mirror Wall Décor MCRR2347 B. Rimo Storage Bench MCRR2322 C. Mini Pendant RDBS2265 D. Silvia Vassileva Painting HYT6269 E. Sculpture Set MCRR1547 F. Table Lamp WZA6859 G. Ekra Cashmere Pillow WZA5577 H. Stendahl Nightstand LGLY2583

REALSIMPLE | wayfair.com a zillion things home

PROP STYLING BY ALMA MELENDEZ FOR HALLEY RESOURCES INC.

UP YOUR SAFETY GAME

Don't text and…walk? That's right. Ten small behavior tweaks to keep you healthy and intact (and out of the ER).

Written by Nancy Rones   Photographs by Levi Brown

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1

YOU KNOW NOT TO...

wear heels every day

BUT DO YOU...

live in flip-flops all summer?

By varying heel heights (or avoiding stilettos altogether), you're sparing yourself foot pain—something that 70 percent of high-heel wearers suffer from. But flimsy flip-flops aren't the best alternative. "Traditional thong flip-flops weren't designed for all-day wear," says Grace Torres-Hodges, D.P.M., a podiatric surgeon in Pensacola, Florida, and a spokesperson for the American Podiatric Medical Association. "They don't provide foot muscles with proper support, so your toes have to work extra hard to hold on to the shoe." That gripping, says Torres-Hodges, may lead to painful inflammation of the toe joints, aggravated calluses, and chronic pain along the balls of the feet. And strain from unsecured heels can bring on plantar fasciitis and heel pain or even a twisted ankle. Save flip-flops for the pool, the beach, or your home. For longer-distance walks and errand running, Torres-Hodges recommends upgrading to a sandal with a back strap and a contoured foot bed.

FLIMSY EXCUSE
Flexible-sole rubber thong flip-flops are a poor—and painful—substitute for sturdier, more supportive sandals.

2

YOU KNOW NOT TO...

leave the house without SPF on your face

BUT DO YOU...

wear it on your hands?

RISKY FORECAST
UV lamps used in gel manicures emit UVA rays equal to a 6 on the UV Index, defined by the EPA as a "high risk of harm from unprotected sun exposure."

Applying a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a minimum SPF of 30 on your face is important. But it's just as important to use one on any skin not covered by clothing, says the American Academy of Dermatology. In a study published in 2015 in the academy's journal, just 30 percent of women reported applying sunscreen to all exposed skin (versus 43 percent who said they used sunscreen only on their faces). Researchers speculate that people are more diligent about protecting the face to prevent signs of aging. But regular UV exposure when you're outdoors, driving, or under the gel-manicure UV lamps at the nail salon can contribute to early signs of aging, such as dark brown spots, wrinkles, and thinning skin on your hands as well (plus an increased skin cancer risk), says Julia Curtis, a clinical instructor of dermatology at the University of Utah School of Medicine, in Salt Lake City. Her advice: Protect all exposed skin, including the ears, neck, upper chest, back, and hands.

"Cancer, I'm protecting my child against you"
Yvonne & Phoebe Cosgrove | Parent & Vaccinated Child
Give your sons and daughters the HPV vaccine series at age 11 or 12, and you're protecting them from six different types of cancer caused by HPV infection. Protect your child. Call 1-855-894-0145, or visit MakingCancerHistory.com/HPV.
Ranked one of the top cancer centers in the nation for 27 years by U.S. News & World Report.
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
MD Anderson
Cancer Center
Making Cancer History®

3

YOU KNOW NOT TO...

mix wine and prescriptions

BUT DO YOU...

have a glass while on OTC cold medicine?

Mixing any alcohol with prescription drugs such as pain medications, sleeping pills, and antidepressants can cause symptoms that range from mild—nausea, dizziness, headaches—to severe, including internal bleeding, heart problems, and difficulty breathing.

But you can face identical problems with over-the-counter (OTC) medicines, says George F. Koob, Ph.D., the director of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Some cough and cold medicines intensify the effects of alcohol, which could lead to fatal breathing trouble. Cough medicines can also contain high levels of alcohol. Ask your doctor how a particular drug might interact with alcohol, and when in doubt, skip the drink.

ROAD WARRIORS

Most people who don't signal think drivers won't let them in if they do, found a survey from VTTI.

4

YOU KNOW NOT TO...

drive without a seat belt

BUT DO YOU...

always use your turn signal?

Eighty-five percent of Americans wear seat belts, which saves lives, says Tom Dingus, Ph.D., the director of the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI). But over a quarter of drivers don't use their blinkers when turning, and nearly half don't signal to change lanes, says 2012 research published by SAE International (formerly the Society of Automotive Engineers). "When you don't signal, it takes time for the other drivers to process your sudden change, and that leads to crashes," says Dingus.

Failure to use blinkers leads to more than twice as many crashes as distracted driving, found a report published by SAE International. Millions of accidents could be avoided if drivers signaled consistently.

SEAL SAFETY

After you pitch or freeze food, scrub the container lids, where salmonella, yeast, and mold can flourish.

5

YOU KNOW NOT TO...

eat food past its use-by date

BUT DO YOU...

keep leftovers longer than three days?

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and other government food-safety agencies suggest finishing foods by their use-by date and relying on the home food-storage guides at foodsafety.gov for foods that have a less dire "best by" date. But leftover cooked foods have a life span, too, and you can't rely on a "sniff test" or look for mold, since bacteria that cause food poisoning may be multiplying without any obvious signs. "Leftover meat, egg dishes, casseroles, and other low-acid cooked foods are safe to eat on average for three to four days, then you should freeze them or throw them out," says Sarah Krieger, a licensed dietitian nutritionist in St. Petersburg, Florida. "Generally foods with acid, such as homemade chili or marinara sauce, are safe for up to five days, since the acids act like a preservative and delay bacterial growth."

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BAG CHECK
The bacteria your handbag picks up in a public restroom can easily contaminate your food-prep area.

6

YOU KNOW NOT TO...
skip flossing and brushing

BUT DO YOU...
use your teeth to remove clothing tags or open food packages?

If you brush twice a day, floss once a day, and see your dentist on a regular basis, your teeth should stay in great shape for a long time, says dentist Kimberly Harms, a national spokesperson for the American Dental Association. Unless, that is, you use them as a handy all-purpose tool. Yanking off hard plastic tags or ripping open wrappers with your pearly whites can cause chips and cracks and eventually wear down the hard enamel that protects teeth, says Harms, who adds that crunching on ice is as bad as using your teeth as scissors. "Once the enamel starts to wear," she says, "you may face tooth sensitivity and higher rates of tooth decay."

7

YOU KNOW NOT TO...
get cozy with the comforter on a hotel bed

BUT DO YOU...
hop right into the hot tub?

A decade ago, well-publicized research by Philip M. Tierno Jr., a professor of microbiology and pathology at the New York University School of Medicine, found numerous germs on hotel bedding, including staph aureus and E. coli.

But while the chemically treated hotel hot tub may seem safer, it often isn't. Human error and equipment failure can cause an imbalance in germ-killing chemicals, potentially leading to outbreaks of Legionella and pseudomonas, says Michele Hlavsa, the chief of the Healthy Swimming Program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Use your senses: A properly-cared-for spa should have no smell, and the tiles on the side of the tub shouldn't feel slick.

POOL PASS
A strong chemical smell is a sign that a pool or a spa is not well maintained. The smell is a by-product of human-body secretions mixing with the chlorine.

8

YOU KNOW NOT TO...
wear shoes in the house

BUT DO YOU...
set your handbag down on the kitchen counter?

Shoes are dirty. In a 2008 study, researchers at the University of Arizona found nine different varieties of bacteria on shoe bottoms, and "90 percent of that bacteria transfers to floor surfaces in the home," says study coauthor Kelly A. Reynolds, Ph.D., a microbiologist at the university's College of Public Health. Your purse may be just as germy, based on research Reynolds coauthored that year. "The bottoms of most handbags had tens of thousands of bacteria," including staph, pseudomonas, salmonella, E. coli, and MRSA, says Reynolds. "Thirty percent had fecal bacteria." Her advice: Regularly machine-wash handbags, if possible, or wipe the bottoms with disinfecting cloths.

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9

YOU KNOW NOT TO...
smoke

BUT DO YOU...
stay put when someone lights up near you?

About 41,000 deaths a year are caused by secondhand smoke, reports the American Lung Association (ALA). Secondhand smoke from cigarettes, cigars, and pipes contains hundreds of toxic chemicals—about 70 of which can cause cancer—and breathing it raises your risk of heart attack. (It has an immediate negative effect on your heart and blood vessels.) It also raises the risk of lung cancer and stroke. Only 25 states, plus Washington, D.C., have laws requiring restaurants and bars to be smoke-free, according to the American Cancer Society. If you live outside those areas, "moving seats in a restaurant won't protect you, since smoke migrates and stays in the air even after the smoker is gone," says Bill Blatt, the national director of Tobacco Programs at the ALA. "To eliminate the health risk, leave—and tell the staff why."

10

YOU KNOW NOT TO...
text and drive

BUT DO YOU...
text and walk?

MEAN STREETS
Over a quarter of Americans admitted to having been in a distracted-walking incident, found the AAOS.

Texting behind the wheel increases the risk of a crash by six to seven times, according to research spanning 2012 to 2015 by VTTI. Although heightened awareness about the hazards of texting and driving has reined in that habit somewhat, says Dingus, a coauthor of *Survive the Drive!*, staring at your phone on the street or in a parking lot isn't much better. "Distracted walking is a worrisome trend among pedestrians," says Alan Hilibrand, M.D., a spokesperson for the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS). "People are putting themselves and others at risk by walking into traffic and tripping over curbs or potholes." In 2015, about 1,300 emergency-room visits were connected to walking while texting, reveals data from the Consumer Product Safety Commission. "That number is probably much higher, since many people don't admit to distracted-walking injuries," says Hilibrand. Avoid scrapes, bruises, broken bones, or a life-threatening accident by stepping out of the flow of cars, bicycles, and people before checking your phone.

5-MINUTE TRAINER

THE SQUAT

What it is

Sit back, but don't relax. As babies, we master the squat before we learn to stand or walk; as adults, we must rediscover our squat potential. This primal movement pattern is a base for many activities, like taking a seat and lifting heavy objects. "The squat will give you the strength to lift correctly by using your lower body instead of your back," says Lisa Wheeler, the vice president of fitness programming at DailyBurn.com. "It's also one of the most time-effective moves for shaping your entire lower body, especially your backside." Since it engages all the major muscle groups of the lower body at once, you can squat your way to being a better runner, tennis player, or dancer. (But no guarantees if you have two left feet.)

Written by
Kimberly Dawn Neumann
Photograph by
Henry Leutwyler

How to do it

START with your feet a little wider than hip-width apart, toes straight ahead.
KEEP your chest lifted and your hands clasped in front of you.
DRIVE your hips back, bending at the knees and ankles and pressing your knees slightly open, as you...
SIT into a squat position, going as deep as you can while still keeping your heels and toes on the ground, chest up, and shoulders back.
STRIVE to break parallel eventually (meaning your legs will be bent slightly more than a 90-degree angle).
PRESS into your feet and straighten your legs to return to the standing upright position.
REPEAT 10 to 20 times. Complete three sets, three times a week.

Advance it

Try a goblet squat. Hold a 10- to 15-pound dumbbell vertically with both hands lightly pressed against your sternum, maintaining contact with your sternum. This will help counterbalance your weight and allow for a deeper range of motion.

BODY CHECK

Execute the move as if you were going to sit in a chair placed behind you. This will help ensure that you are driving your hips back. (1) Go as deep as you can comfortably. If you have knee issues, don't go deeper than a 90-degree angle, with your thighs parallel to the floor. (2) Keep your heels "glued" to the floor as you squat, and think about driving them into the ground as you straighten your legs to return to the starting position. (This will put even more emphasis on your glutes.) (3) Keep your knees in line with your toes. Also, don't let your knees cave in. Press them outward so they stay aligned with your feet as you squat down. (4) Do allow your torso to tilt naturally as you squat. (Just don't collapse your chest or round your shoulders forward.) If you're too erect, your hips cannot release properly and you'll put too much strain on your knees.

Muscles trained

QUADRICEPS, HAMSTRINGS, GLUTEALS

TIP

Having trouble mastering the squat? It could be an ankle-mobility issue. Try putting a folded towel under each heel.

STYLING BY ALYSSA DINEEN; HAIR AND MAKEUP BY SUSAN DONOGHUE FOR ENNIS INC. ILLUSTRATION BY BROWNBIRD DESIGN

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- ✓ ***1 cup*** frozen unsweetened strawberries
- ✓ ***1 cup*** vanilla, strawberry or chocolate fat free frozen yogurt
- ✓ ***3/4 cup*** fat free milk
- ✓ ***Blend*** all ingredients until smooth. Enjoy!

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GRAB THE TISSUES

Talking to your child about a loved one with a serious illness—whether it's a grandparent, a friend, or even you—feels impossible. This story won't make that easy, but it will help you feel prepared. Here's how to handle the conversation (and all those follow-up questions) with care.

Written by Sharlene Breakey
Illustrations by Andrea De Santis

GRANDPA HAD A STROKE. Your sister needs surgery. Mommy has breast cancer. *Ugh.* When someone you love gets a bad diagnosis, the news is hard enough on adults. But breaking it to your kids? Where do you even begin? Besides the basics (when, where, how to start the conversation), there are the larger, looming concerns: How much is too much—or too little—to share? What if it affects my teen's schoolwork? Will my six-year-old have bad dreams? Won't the worry be too much for their sweet little hearts? It's enough to make anyone think, *Maybe I should just keep the news to myself.* Here's the thing about that, though: You can't.

"Kids know when something's up. They overhear things or see you whispering and fill in the blanks," says Robin Goodman, Ph.D., a psychologist and the executive director of A Caring Hand, a nonprofit in New York City that helps children and families deal with loss. "And the scary things they come up with are usually far worse than the truth." It's much better to teach kids strategies for how to manage the situation, building resilience now and for the future. "Families that talk openly can shape kids' attitudes and can forge a path together," says Goodman. Consider the alternative: how terrifying that path is for kids left to wander it alone. (Hint: You're not the only one surfing the Web.) "Today children are so young when they turn to the Internet for answers, and there is so much unreliable information," says Paula Rauch, M.D., the director of Massachusetts General Hospital's Parenting at a Challenging Time Program and a coauthor of *Raising an Emotionally Healthy Child When a Parent Is Sick.* "They don't know what to make of it. Worse, you'll probably never know what they've learned." You want to deal with serious illness as a family unit. This is how to start.

GROUND RULES

Every situation is unique, but some overall guidelines apply to them all.

Deal with your own emotions first. Talk things through with another adult—a good friend, a spouse, a therapist. "It's like putting the oxygen mask on yourself first," says Betsy Brown Braun, a child-development and behavior specialist and the author of *Just Tell Me What to Say.* "Kids soak up your anxiety."

Pick your time carefully. You want minimal distractions. Talk in the car or on a family hike, offering time for them to mull over the information and ask questions. A weekend or after school is probably best.

Refer to the disease by its proper name. "That is the beginning of everything," says Rauch. "It makes it 'talk-about-able' and concrete." You want to send the message that hard things can be discussed, not minimized.

Be honest—within reason. "You don't have to answer their questions with the total truth," says Goodman. "Approach it like anything else. Tailor explanations to what is appropriate for the child's age and your situation." This may mean skipping the specifics of chemotherapy side effects or what, exactly, is being removed during the surgery.

Prepare for the Question of All Questions. *Are you/is he...going to die?* "There is no one right answer, but I can tell you a wrong one," says Brown Braun. "Don't say no unless you are 100 percent sure that's true. Instead, tell them what you can in as reassuring a manner as possible: 'Right now I have the best doctors, and we are doing everything possible to make my body well again. I'm planning to have many more years with you.'"

Talk logistics. Kids at every age are egocentric, says Goodman, so relate what you share to their everyday life. "I will need to get a blood test every Wednesday to ensure the medicine is working, so Aunt Jenny will get you to band practice on those days."

WALK TO END ALZHEIMER'S
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LIVING WITH ALZHEIMER'S.

Take it one conversation at a time. If it seems like a lot, it is. But you don't have to accomplish everything at once.

WHAT TO DO WHEN THE SICK LOVED ONE IS…

A BELOVED ELDERLY RELATIVE

Declining health of grandparents (or great-aunts and great-uncles) can be painful, but it may also be the easiest situation for young minds to grasp, says Goodman. "Even young children often learn that older bodies don't work as well forever," she says.

HOW TO BRING IT UP: Chances are the kids have an idea that something is up, so don't dawdle. "A grandfather with a serious heart problem may not have the same engagement, causing kids to make assumptions, like 'He doesn't love me as much anymore,'" says Wendy Mogel, Ph.D., the author of *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee.* Acknowledging the change is your way in. "Say, 'I know it's hard that Grandpa hasn't been coming to your baseball games lately. Here's why,'" suggests Goodman. Remember that a wondrous tone can help little kids grasp the enormity. Says Mogel: "Tell them something like 'The heart has to pump 70 times a minute to circulate blood, and Grandpa has been doing that for more than 80 years. How amazing is that? But now his heart is having a harder time.'"

HOW TO HELP THEM COPE: Give your kids a sense of agency, not helplessness, by treating them like health-care advocates, whether they're 4 or 14, says Mogel. Say, "We can't help Grandpa's heart, but how can we take his mind off of it?" Then make a plan together. For a beach-loving grandpa, collect shells to bring him. Grandma loves purple? Pick out a soft violet blanket for her.

AS THINGS GET WORSE: When the inevitable is imminent, it's time to impart what can be an enormously comforting life skill: keeping a loved one's memory alive. Have kids write (or tell you) the top-10 things about Gramps, then

illustrate it. Or try this: "There's a Jewish tradition in which it's your responsibility to identify a loved one's special traits and carry them on in your own life," says Mogel. If Grandma always surprised everyone with butterscotch candies, for instance, talk about how your daughter might start to give small, unexpected gifts to her own friends.

A CLASSMATE

It's harder for kids to wrap their heads around someone their age battling a life-threatening or life-altering illness. This can also trigger fears about death. **HOW TO BRING IT UP:** Without being voyeuristic, first learn as much as you can about the situation from a teacher or school friends. You could even consult a doctor to find out more about the disease. Then ask your child a few open-ended questions to suss out what she has heard, says Brown Braun. Chances are her schoolmates have been sharing all kinds of garbled misinformation. Lay out the real facts, reassuring her that it's very unusual for kids to get sick. "Tell them it's easy for a brain to get stuck on worry, and if they have any fears, the best thing they can do is talk about it," says Laura Kastner, Ph.D., a clinical professor of psychiatry at the University of Washington, in Seattle.

HOW TO HELP THEM COPE: Robert Brooks, Ph.D., a psychologist on the faculty of Harvard Medical School and a coauthor of *Raising Resilient Children,* suggests an old classic—making and sending a card, which is appropriate even if the kids don't socialize outside the classroom. Children feel better being constructive, he says. Or ask the teacher if the class will do something; if she has no plans, volunteer to spearhead the project, like performing a song and sending a video. You'll be helping to channel their anxiety and modeling how to support friends. If your child wants to visit at the hospital, check in first with the sick child's family—and prepare your child for what she will see.

AS THINGS GET WORSE: Bring up the classmate periodically, but avoid what Kastner calls "emotional dumpster diving."

She says, "Don't pepper kids with questions. They build scar tissue from all the interviewing." Instead, say something in a drive-by way, like "Oh, I saw Jeremy's mom, and she said he did really well with his last treatment. Isn't that great?" This conversation starter lets you gauge your child's emotional state without putting him in the hot seat. ("Did you talk about Jeremy at school? How are you feeling about it?")

ANOTHER MOM OR DAD

When another parent gets sick, it—surprise—fuels your child's fear that you could be next.

HOW TO BRING IT UP: Find out what the family has let their own children

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LOST SOMEONE TO ALZHEIMER'S.

WHEN IT'S PEANUT THE GUINEA PIG

The demise of a family pet—cat or dog, goldfish or lizard—can bring profound heartbreak to a child. Which is one reason you should have a pet in the first place.

SAY WHAT? **Letting a child assist in the care of an infirm animal—and participate in its burial, if it comes to that—helps her learn crucial life skills in a less charged environment (one in which you will be there to comfort and teach her). This is excellent practice for future human situations. "The death of a pet is often where these hard lessons start," says Evan Imber-Black.**
DO: **Cuddle up with your kid and *The Tenth Good Thing About Barney,* a classic book about all the wonderful things a family cat (and his death) offers.**
DON'T: **Scout out an ailing hamster's doppelgänger to swap in when the time comes. "Death is very rich if you don't pretend it's not happening," says Wendy Mogel.**

know and follow their lead. Your child shouldn't know more or be asked to keep secrets, says Evan Imber-Black, Ph.D., the director of the Center for Families and Health at the Ackerman Institute for the Family, in New York City, and the author of *The Secret Life of Families.*
HOW TO HELP THEM COPE: Get kids' minds off their own fears and onto problem-solving. *How can you help your friends?* "This is a great opportunity to teach your kids about empathy and supporting community," says Brown Braun. "Say, 'I'm going to have Sam come here on Thursdays, because his mom is going to be tired.'" Then talk about what the kids might do to lend support. Maybe they can make a batch of Sam's favorite cookies to drop off, pick up gift certificates to a pizza place, or help distract Sam by taking him to a movie.
AS THINGS GET WORSE: "Kids go quickly from 'It can happen to them' to 'It can happen to you,'" says Kastner. So give your child plenty of opportunities to express that fear. Reassure her that her parents' bodies are fine. But even if she doesn't express worry (older kids may be less likely to say something), you can slip reassurances into the conversation. Something like: "It's not often that people our age get this disease, but it's good to be extra careful, so Dad and I are both having checkups soon."

A SIBLING

When one of your kids is sick, it can have a profound impact on the others. The healthy child might feel as if he has lost his parents, wrapped up as they are in their sick child's treatment.
HOW TO BRING IT UP: Don't hold back. It is impossible not to be wholly affected by what is going on with a sibling. "And you don't want one kid standing alone on the sidelines," says Brown Braun. Include the well child in discussions and treatment as much as possible, so she will feel the support you are giving her sibling. Pay close attention to her concerns, though they might seem less urgent by comparison. The well child is probably thinking, *Am I going to get this?* But she doesn't want to bother you. "It's up to you to help her ask, then assure her that it's very, very unlikely," says Brown Braun.
HOW TO HELP THEM COPE: Even as you include the well child as much as possible day to day, try not to disrupt her normal activities. Before hospital visits, prepare older kids by describing the equipment that they can expect to see in the hospital room or at the chemotherapy treatment. Little ones may need easier, more fun ways to learn the scary stuff. So read them a picture book about a hospital or help them draw one of their own, says Imber-Black. Hospital visits don't have to be bleak. Says Goodman, "If they love to play video games, ask him to pick out one that they can play together." This can also help you set expectations. "Your brother

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DETERMINED TO END ALZHEIMER'S.

gets really tired, so let's bring just one game this time." Also, be sure both you and your spouse—or other close adults—schedule time to spend with the well child. If one of you can't get away from the hospital, develop a system where your child at home texts pictures of important school papers or artwork, then touch base with FaceTime calls.

AS THINGS GET WORSE: Acknowledge that it stinks for her that you are spending so much time on her sick brother, but make it clear that you would do the same for her. And go ahead and acknowledge that there are some things in the sick role that seem enviable, but there's a lot that isn't, says Rauch. Sure, her brother is lucky to be getting attention and toys. But he is also unlucky to have to take medicine that makes him throw up and be in the boring hospital. "Siblings struggle with feeling terribly guilty that their sibling got this but also a little bit glad it's not them," says Imber-Black. "This will show itself in a six-year-old who decides to swipe his brother's toys. You need to let them know that it's OK to have any kinds of feelings and that you won't react negatively to it."

YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE

Yep, this one is tough.

HOW TO BRING IT UP: Try to ferret out what your child already knows (or thinks he knows) rather than launching into a lengthy explanation, says Rauch. She suggests probing with specific questions, like "Have you noticed that I've been walking with a limp? Or that Grandma has been calling a lot?" After assessing what he knows, tell him a simple version of the diagnosis and plans for treatment and keeping the house running smoothly. Balance it with loads of reassurance. Mention that you will always be sure to tell him if anything changes. Finally, clue in his caregivers ASAP. "From friends' parents to the track coach to the freshman dean, they all need to be aware of what your child is going through so they can support him and pick up on problems," says Rauch.

HOW TO HELP THEM COPE: Turn the family into a team so kids can feel as if you are all working together to get you well, says Imber-Black. Do a charity walk or bike ride to raise money for the disease, or make family T-shirts with supportive slogans. "I had one dad call me from a breast cancer walk because he had to tell me his 12-year-old daughter, who had been anxious and withdrawn since her mother's diagnosis, was warming up and holding her mom's hand," says Brooks. That all-in mentality can also work when you need help around the house.

AS THINGS GET WORSE: Make sure that you aren't asking too much of older children. You might learn that cooking dinner once a week is making your daughter miss practice, and she didn't want to bother you about it. "Extra responsibilities shouldn't interfere with activities that bring normalcy into their lives," says Brooks. Be prepared for kids of all ages to act out, says Imber-Black: "They're scared and sad, and that turns to anger."

Let your child know that you are worried, too, so you can be in it together. Says Rauch: "Say, 'Sometimes I feel worried. I know that sometimes you are worried, and we should share our worries with each other. None of us have to go up and down by ourselves.'"

And when the prognosis is the worst? Keep talking. Articulate as much as you can about timing in a reassuring way. "'The doctor is focused on shrinking my tumor, and that is making me sick, but no one is worried about me dying in the next six months or even the next year,'" says Rauch. "It makes it hard to live in the present if you think your parent is going to die any minute."

If you notice certain behaviors—not sleeping or eating, bed wetting, thumb sucking, trouble leaving the house, or being less engaged in activities or with friends—consider having your child talk to a therapist. "Don't assume that they are going to cry," says Kastner. "The beautiful thing about kids is that, with support, they can handle a lot, because they'll get busy with their own lives—and that's good news."

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Get tips on what to say to a sick friend in your own life at realsimple.com/sickfriend.

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THE VIEW FROM HERE

With two simultaneous jobs at General Motors, *Dhivya Suryadevara* oversees funding for the automaker's capital activities, banking relationships, and $80 billion pension plan. She commutes between New York City, where her home and family are, and Detroit. To say that Suryadevara, 37, likes a challenge is an understatement.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JENNIFER DAVIS

DHIVYA SURYADEVARA
- General Motors vice president, finance and treasurer, and CEO of GM Asset Management
- New York City

What was your childhood like?
I grew up and spent most of my childhood in Chennai, in south India. My dad passed away when I was very young, so it was my mother, sisters, and me. My mom had to raise three children on her own, which is difficult to do anywhere, let alone in India. She wanted to make sure there were no corners cut when it came to our education and to prove that we could have the same resources as a two-parent household. Her high expectations made us want to do better, and we learned that nothing comes easy. You have to really work hard to get what you want.

Written by Jane Porter

Did you know what you wanted to be when you grew up?
Not at all. It's not like I said, "I want to work for a large automotive company." What I *did* know is that I liked anything challenging and complicated.

What about college?
I went to college in India in the city where I grew up. I had a bachelor's in commerce, which is basically business. I wanted to get my M.B.A. from a top business program. I moved here when I was 22 to go to Harvard.

Had you been to the United States before?
That was my first time. It was overwhelming. I was very far from home, and there was definitely culture shock. At that time, Harvard Business School took people with a certain amount of work experience, and I had worked through undergrad but had come straight out of college.

What came next?
I didn't have much money when I got here. My friends would take

school trips, but that wasn't an option for me. I was living on debt the whole time. Everything was funded with student loans that I had to pay back. In those circumstances, you're under a different amount of pressure to find a job.

So you went into investment banking.
Yes, I worked at UBS for a little over a year. When I was 25, I made the switch to GM.

Some people think of GM as a stodgy, old company. What took you there?
It struck me right away that there was no shortage of interesting things to do there. I saw that I was only limited by how much effort and time I wanted to put in, which is what made me want to work harder.

How does your commute work?
I'm based in New York, and the team is in Detroit. My husband and [10-year-old] daughter are based in New York. Weekends, I'm there, and the weeks are dependent on what's going on at any given time. I spend a lot of time going back and forth.

"I don't have a silver bullet for balance. Some weeks will just be hard."

How have you adapted to it?
It teaches you to be more efficient. When I'm in Detroit, I take more meetings and focus on work so that it's easier for me to be with my family when I'm in New York. And I work while I travel. I get hundreds of e-mails each day. I use my time on the plane to go through them.

How do you unwind?
Exercise keeps me sane, especially boxing. It's very therapeutic.

What's it like to be in a meeting with you?
We all spend way too much time in meetings. My meetings are on the shorter side. I encourage different points of view. I like to ask, "What are we missing?"

How are you evolving as a manager?
I tend to micromanage. As I've taken on more and more responsibilities, it has become more about where do I want to extricate myself and say others will do this versus me?

When you're not at work, what does your day look like?
Most of the free time I have, I spend with my daughter, and I really dedicate that time to her. I like to take her to school and chat. That's important to me.

What are your thoughts on balance?
You can't follow a template that works for someone else. It's about prioritization. I don't have time to cook. I recognize that and don't even bother.

What works for you personally?
I don't have a silver bullet for balance, but I try to make the most of every week, recognizing that there will be some weeks that are hard.

Is your daughter curious about your job?
She has shown a lot of interest in what I do. She Googles me sometimes and will say, "Mommy, I found these links about you." When you ask her what she wants to do, she'll tell you, "Whatever my mom does."

ASK BUCKY

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My work neighbor won't stop talking about her wedding. And she makes wedding calls all day long. What do I do?
You're asking her to behave professionally, so you don't want to be *un*professional in handling this. No whispering to others. Go to lunch or coffee with her, and when the subject of her wedding comes up naturally, take the opening. Say, "I know this is touchy, because this is such a happy time for you, but I wanted to give you a heads-up. In the past, when people in our office have talked a lot about their weddings, it's bothered some people." Tell her that her name has not been mentioned. The hope is she'll hear this as gentle advice. On the off chance that she's stunned into silence, you can deflect by telling her that some coworkers are having boyfriend troubles and you know she wouldn't want to hurt them. You're just letting her know what the environment has been around this subject. Make it quick, then change the subject.

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PORTRAIT BY SARAH MAYCOCK

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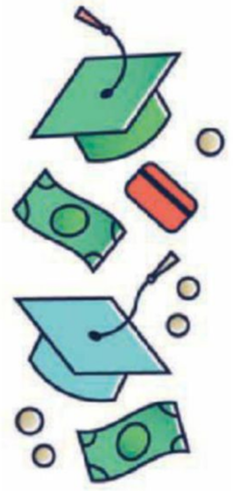
How to retire with enough money

You'll need eight times your annual salary to stop working *(gulp)*, says economist and retirement expert Teresa Ghilarducci, the author of *How to Retire With Enough Money*. Here are Ghilarducci's no-nonsense do's and don'ts for every age.

IN YOUR 20s

"If your company offers a 401(k), the decision to participate is a no-brainer. But if you aren't offered any way to save at work, you need to start an individual retirement account [IRA] with your first paycheck. In either case, you should try to save 15 to 20 percent of your salary, which can include your employer's match. In this case, more is more."

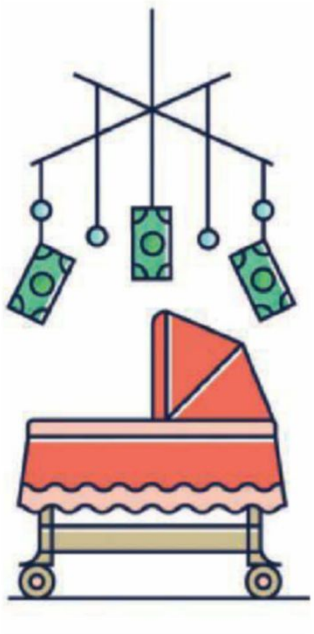


DO **use a debit card—or cash.** "If you need to use a credit card because you can't pay for a purchase in that moment, that means you can't afford it. This includes not just products but also evenings out. If you do get a credit card, have only one. (Note that store cards look bad to credit analysts; get a bank credit card instead.) Then keep monthly charges below 10 percent of your credit limit and pay them off in full. No matter how low your interest rate, you should never have a balance at the end of the month."

DON'T **go into debt for grad school.** "I find a lot of students are borrowing money to get a master's degree. For a professional degree—law, teaching, social work—that's one thing. But for general education it's not going to have a positive rate of return. Take an intensive course instead. You can get badges of expertise on Coursera and other online programs for a lot less money without leaving the labor market."

CARD TRICK
"One of the myths about building credit is that you have to be a debtor," says Ghilarducci, who advises those in their 20s to avoid credit cards.

Written by Liz Loerke
Illustrations by Studio Muti



IN YOUR 30s

"One of the biggest decisions comes when you start a family and have to determine whether one parent stops working. It's a personal choice. But after two years, staying out of the labor market hurts that parent's future earnings. Even staying out for six months can have an impact. It's also important to factor the cost of child care into your decision to have a family."

RENT OR BUY?
Ghilarducci recommends using the calculator at dinkytown.com to solve this dilemma: "The last person you want to get advice from on this is a real estate agent."

DO **get a 15-year mortgage.** "You should also be able to make a 20 percent down payment. If you need a 30-year mortgage and you can't put 20 percent down, choose a smaller, cheaper home." Aside from saving a fortune in interest, with a 15-year mortgage and 20 percent down, you'll get a good rate.

DON'T **stress about your credit score.** "FICO scores are overrated. Having 20 percent down, having a job, and having a record of making steady, on-time payments on loans, bills, and rent eliminates the need for an extraordinary credit score. This is what lenders are looking at."

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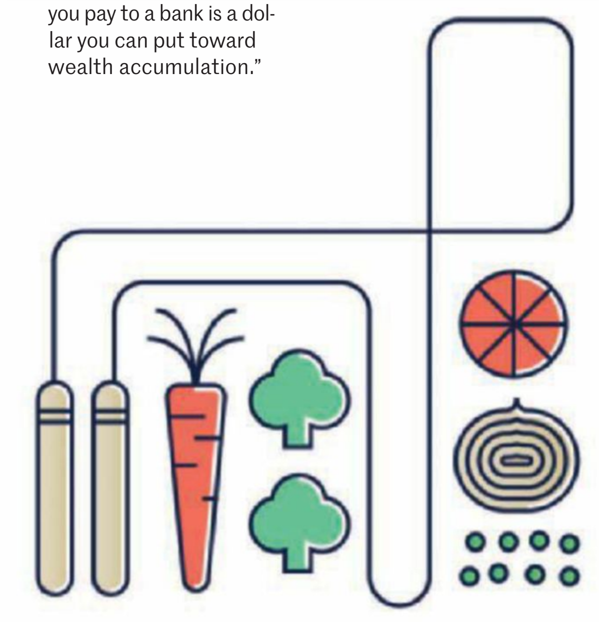
IN YOUR
40s

"You stop seeing the big salary increases you received in your 20s and 30s. Now is the time to consolidate—to embrace your current lifestyle and the stuff you already have. It is *not* the time for aspirational buying."

DO prioritize your mortgage. "Paying off your mortgage is a form of saving. Put this before any extra expenditure, like a vacation or dining out. I even think you should pay off your house before putting money in a 529 plan for your children. Each dollar less you pay to a bank is a dollar you can put toward wealth accumulation."

DON'T get seduced by a brand-name college. "It's unrealistic for families to save $400,000 for a private-school education *and* to save for their retirement. I'm not going to pretend that that is possible. Prepare your child (and yourself) to choose a college based on cost. Fall in love with your state school. Help your child understand the money your family can save by choosing a school that offers a good education for a low price."

INHERITANCE COMING?
Let it be a nice surprise if and when it happens. Don't count on it. "Anticipating money gifts is *not* a financial plan—or good for your mental health," says Ghilarducci.



IN YOUR
50s

"The most important thing you can do is get on an exercise regimen, because that will save you health-care costs in your 60s and 70s. Eat right and take care of yourself. Investing in your health is investing in your retirement security."

DO take a reality check. "If you haven't been saving throughout your career, you need to start saving 50 percent now. That means you're going to have to go cold turkey on spending."

DON'T get bumped out of the labor market. "This is a particularly important time to improve your work skills, because if you lose your job, you're going to face age discrimination. Bite the bullet and become computer- and social-media–literate. Make sure your people skills are good, because your technical skills are probably going to be a bit behind."

IN YOUR
60s

"Use your 401(k) to delay collecting Social Security until age 70, if you can. That's when the government pays the maximum benefit. If you can wait until age 70, your monthly Social Security benefit will be 76 percent higher than it would have been if you had started collecting at age 62—for the rest of your life. You can't get that kind of deal anywhere!"

DO look out for financial scams. "Many focus on people over the age of 65. Beware of solicitations for charitable giving or supplemental Medicare coverage." (If you have questions about extra coverage, a reliable source is aarp.com.)

DON'T keep giving handouts. "Your kids stop getting money when you're in your 60s. The music stops, so to speak. Whatever chair they sat in, that's where they sit."

IT'S COMPLICATED
There are fascinating, crazy variations on the legal retirement age based on the year you were born. Read all about it at ssa.gov.

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CAREER COACH

Off-hours work etiquette (in an always-on world)

Remember boundaries? (Just barely.) *Real Simple* turned to experts with five scenarios to learn if, when, and how you can separate work time from good old-fashioned downtime.

Your boss regularly bombards you with e-mails at 2 A.M. on Sunday.

If you look at your in-box on a Sunday, "work isn't encroaching on your personal life—you're *inviting* work into your personal life," says Maura Thomas, a productivity expert and the founder of RegainYourTime.com. But considering your boss's habit, shift your schedule. "Set your alarm 20 minutes earlier on Monday morning so you can check your e-mail first thing and reply," says Beverly Langford, the author of *The Etiquette Edge: Modern Manners for Business Success.* This way, when you arrive at the office, you're all caught up. And if you think she's waiting for your feedback on Sunday night? Thomas says she's probably not: "CEO clients say they often send out notes when a thought comes to them. They absolutely don't expect a response in that moment."

The person on the other side of the cubicle friended you on Facebook, and you don't really want to go there.

"If an associate sends me a friend request," says Langford, "I'll decline but write her a personal message on LinkedIn, explaining that I prefer to keep my connections organized this way." If that won't cut it, use privacy settings to create a custom list for coworkers, clients, and industry contacts, says Alison Green, a coauthor of *Managing to Change the World.* There's a third option, too: "Do nothing," says Diane Gottsman, the founder of the Protocol School of Texas; maybe the person won't notice.

Your company asks staffers to post on social media about work news.

If this is only an occasional request, you can try keeping your head down and saying that you are not active on social media (assuming that your privacy settings are in effect). If this is more of a regular policy, have a conversation with your boss. Says Gottsman, "Explain that you prefer to keep your personal accounts personal, and gauge her reaction." It could be that this doesn't matter all that much to her. If she conveys that she does care, though, suck it up and post.

CULTURE COMES FROM THE TOP
If your boss posts to her social accounts about work news, don't be shocked if you're expected to also.

Everybody in the office follows one another on Instagram. As the boss, you aren't sure about joining in.

"When you have to stop and wonder whether something is appropriate—especially in the tricky world of social media—the answer is probably no," says Gottsman. It's fine if underlings choose to follow your feed, as long as you don't mind, but don't reciprocate. "You don't want your employees to feel like they can't be themselves because you're watching," she says.

You saved up all your vacation for three uninterrupted weeks away, but your boss seems to think that you'll be in touch.

If the vacation is approved, the assumption is that others have taken similarly lengthy breaks. These coworkers are your experts on how to handle communication while away. "It's unrealistic, in my opinion, to think that you can leave for several weeks and have zero contact with your office," says Langford. "Instead, create a plan that allows limited interaction." The degree to which you're in touch will depend on the culture of your workplace. Run your plan by your boss—whether it's checking e-mail once in the morning and once in the evening or being off the grid for a stretch, then calling in. Convey that you're reachable for emergencies but that you're hoping mostly to unplug.

Written by
Sara Morrow

Illustration by
Studio Muti

BRIGHT IDEAS

OFFERS | EVENTS | FINDS | GIVEAWAYS

▶ MEET THE BLOGGER: LAUREN KELP

Entertaining enthusiast, gin & tonic lover, and party stylist—meet the creative director behind the thoughtful lifestyle site **laurenkelp.com**. Dedicated to the savvy gal on the go, her blog is all about living life well without the pressures of being perfect in today´s world. With contributors around the world and press features in *Elle*, *Domino* and *LUXE Magazine*, Lauren believes in making entertaining approachable again, one party at a time.

Lauren is also the founder of Tablemakers Dinner—a gathering of innovative creatives brought together by good food and conversation. Hosted in cities all over the country, these dinners embody the belief that entertaining should be a celebration!

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You're invited to celebrate Look Good Feel Better National Beauty Editors Day on Thursday, August 4, 4–8PM at Saks Fifth Avenue in New York City. Go to **lookgoodfeelbetter.org/register** to reserve a 15-minute beauty consultation with Real Simple Beauty Director, Heather Muir.

For just a $40 donation, you'll also receive a makeover, plus a special gift from your choice of 26 brands! All proceeds will be donated to Look Good Feel Better, a program that helps cancer patients feel beautiful during treatment.

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NEAL WHITE (LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA, 1975)

GALLERY STOCK

HOW TO PAINT (JUST ABOUT) ANYTHING

It's the easiest-ever way to make a splash—cover it with color!—but it helps to know the pros' tips and tricks. This story gives you all the gear and guidance that you need.

Written by
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Prop Styling by
Ariana Salvato
Illustrations by
Toby Neilan

Did you know that you can paint a metal light fixture or a plastic chair? Even a laminate countertop? OK, so it takes more than a brush and a can. But with the right kind of instruction (read on!), you can tackle nearly any paint project. And here is the pros' number one rule: Don't rush. "Skipping prep work or the second coat always backfires," says DIY expert Lucianna Samu. "Also, make sure you start from the top. It keeps drips from ruining areas you've already painted." Gravity, people.

PICK YOUR PAINT

Which type is best for cabinets? Doors? Floors? This breakdown helps you decide.

latex

Made from synthetic polymers, like acrylic or vinyl-acrylic, suspended in water, latex paint is the most durable choice for many projects, and the type that most DIYers choose. It doesn't have the noxious odor, long drying time, messy cleanup, or yellowing tendency that oil-based paint often has.

PROS: Fast-drying, low-odor; cleans up with soap and water.
CONS: Not as smooth or hard as oil-based paint.
BEST FOR: Just about any application, from trim to floors to furniture.

waterborne alkyd

A newer addition to the market, waterborne-alkyd paint—made of alkyd resin suspended in a water base—is essentially a marriage of latex paint and oil paint. It dries to a hard, smooth finish like oil-based paint and is low-odor like water-based paint.

PROS: The finish is tough and resistant; low-odor; cleans up with soap and water.
CONS: About 10 percent more expensive than standard latex.
BEST FOR: Trim, doors, and cabinets, which need a paint that yields a smooth finish and handles wear and tear.

milk paint

One of the oldest-known forms of paint, milk paint gets its name from its main ingredient: casein, a dairy protein. It comes in powdered form; you mix it with water to create the paint.

PROS: All-natural; since you mix it yourself, you can customize the consistency and saturation.
CONS: Not as long-lasting as latex; if you mix it too thin, the color can streak.
BEST FOR: Creating a soft, vintage look on walls or furniture.

spray paint

Packaged in a sealed, pressurized container, spray paint is released in an aerosol spray.

PROS: Quick and easy to use; airborne particles can reach places a brush can't, like around the fibers of wicker furniture.
CONS: Can be difficult to spray evenly; can be messy (overspraying is hard to avoid); many versions are high in VOCs.
BEST FOR: Painting small objects and getting into the crevices of ornate detailing.

What is low-VOC paint?

Paint with 50 grams per liter (g/l) or less of volatile organic compounds. VOCs are organic chemicals that evaporate at room temperature, giving off fumes and potentially causing health issues. The less you're exposed to them, the better. Federal law limits VOCs to 250 g/l for flat finishes and 380 g/l for others; California has stricter limits. It's safest to use formulas labeled "low-VOC," which have 50 g/l or less, or even "no-VOC," which have 5 g/l or less.

CHOOSE YOUR FINISH

It may not be as big a consideration as color, but picking the right sheen does affect the way a paint job turns out. To choose one, consider how you use the room and the effect that you're going for, then consult this cheat sheet.

FLAT/MATTE

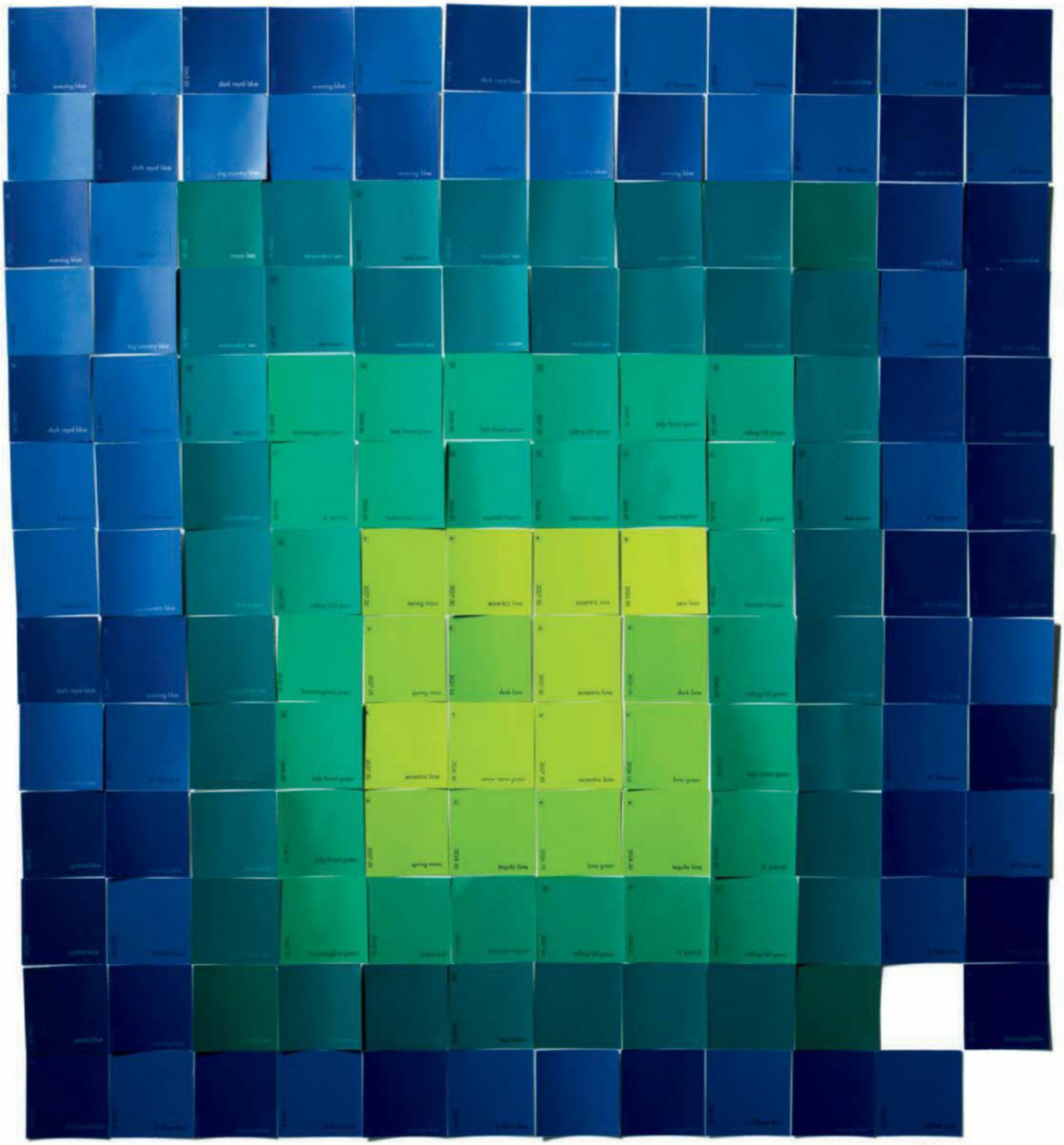
PROS: A velvety finish that hides surface imperfections. **CONS:** Although more durable than they used to be, flat and matte finishes are softer and less scrubbable than higher-sheen options, so they may not hold up as well on walls that get bumped or need frequent cleaning. **BEST FOR:** Ceilings, as well as walls in low-traffic spots, such as adult bedrooms and dining rooms.

EGGSHELL/SATIN

PROS: A tough, slightly reflective surface that holds up well to cleaning and traffic. **CONS:** Doesn't camouflage surface imperfections as well as matte finishes do. **BEST FOR:** Kitchens, bathrooms, hallways, kids' rooms.

SEMIGLOSS/HIGH GLOSS

PROS: A hard, shiny finish that withstands vacuum-cleaner bumps and scrubbing. **CONS:** The reflective surface catches the light on high spots, exaggerating lumps and bumps (especially with high gloss); extensive surface prep is required for mirror-smooth results. **BEST FOR:** Trim, doors, cabinets, and furniture.



ALWAYS TRY BEFORE YOU BUY! For a sense of how different shades will look in your space, use the Paint Tester app (free). Snap a picture of the room, then "try on" different colors by tapping a paint-bucket icon. You can also tape a real paint-color chip to the wall in your room, photograph it, and use the app's Color Picker tool, which matches the sample shade and "paints" the room with it so you can see how it will look on the walls.

BRUSH FINDER

When (and why) to use each type.

angled sash

Most pros prefer a 2½- to 3-inch angled sash brush for painting trim and "cutting in" (painting a strip along the edge of the ceiling, floor, or wall before rolling for neat, complete coverage). For small spots and for maneuvering into the corners of furniture, a two-inch brush with a short, stubby handle works best. Always choose a synthetic-bristle brush for latex paint; natural bristles absorb too much water and become floppy.

flat

For doors, cabinets, and paneling—or anything flat and wide—pick a four- to five-inch flat brush. With long, straight bristles, it covers a wide swath at once.

roller

For floors, walls, and ceilings, choose an eight- or nine-inch roller, which will cover the area quickly but won't be so heavy that it tires your arm. Painting trim or the stiles of a door? Go with a mini roller, usually about four inches wide. Choose a synthetic roller cover for latex paint; natural materials will absorb too much water and swell. A ⅜-inch nap length works well on most surfaces with most paints. But if the surface is particularly rough, you'll want a longer nap.

PAINT MATH

HOW MUCH DO I NEED TO BUY?

One gallon of paint covers approximately 350 square feet. You may need more if you're painting a raw-wood floor, because unfinished surfaces absorb more paint than previously painted or primed ones do. If you're covering a dark color with a lighter one, you'll need more paint, too. There are equations that you can use to figure out exactly how much to buy, but it's easiest to plug figures into an app or an online tool—every major paint company offers one. (You'll need to measure the room, but you won't have to break out your calculator.)

THE BASICS

DROP CLOTHS: Plastic ones are disposable, but they can be slippery and need to be taped down; canvas drop cloths are about three times more expensive but are also reusable. Some pros use both, layering canvas drop cloths over plastic for foolproof protection plus a nonslip surface. But you can get the same effect for less with taped-down garbage bags and sheets of newspaper on top.
TAPE: Use regular masking tape to secure plastic drop cloths. Stick with high-quality painter's tape for creating sharp lines around trim.
PAPER TOWELS AND RAGS: Heavy-duty paper towels (like Viva) make quick work of drips and drops. (This may seem obvious, but you'll probably go through a roll.) Rags for wiping up particles from sanding are a must.
LATEX OR RUBBER GLOVES: Protect your hands from rough sandpaper and inevitable paint splatters.
MASK: Keep dust out of your mouth and nose when you're doing any heavy-duty sanding.
SCREWDRIVER: You may need one to remove screws from hardware and electrical plates. A screwdriver can clean out a crack or a gouge before filling or caulking. It can also take off a paint-can lid.

DO'S AND DON'TS

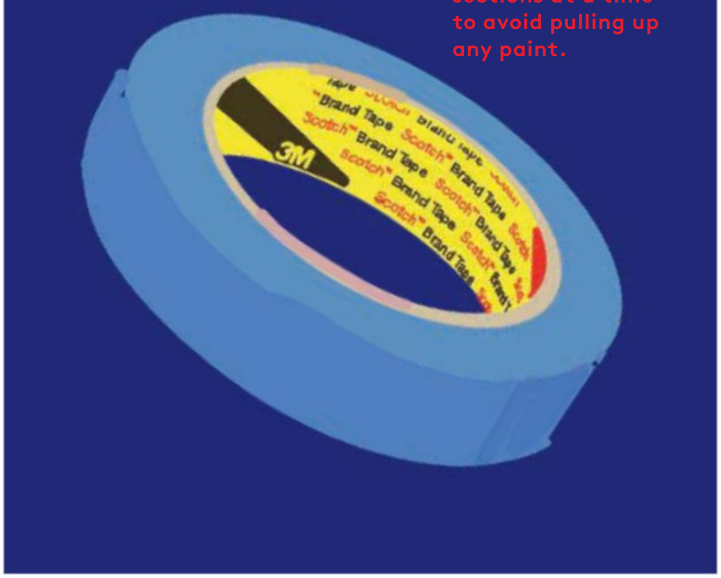
OF PAINTER'S TAPE

DO buy the best. (Frog Tape and ScotchBlue with EdgeLock are two pro favorites.) Cheaper versions tend to allow more seepage.
DON'T skip the sealing step. After you put down the tape, run a plastic putty knife along the tape's edge to get rid of any air bubbles and get a perfect seal.
DO remove the tape while the paint is still damp (within 15 minutes). If you wait until it's dry, you could end up pulling up paint with the tape. (See below for the fix.)

UH-OH!

I DIDN'T REMOVE THE TAPE FAST ENOUGH, AND NOW THE PAINT IS DRY

Use a utility knife to cut very carefully along the edge of the tape, removing small sections at a time to avoid pulling up any paint.



Do I need to prep and prime, no matter what?

You can skip this if you are giving a flea-market find a colorful new coat and aren't set on perfection. (Just clean the item with soap and water and let dry.) But if you're repainting your front door or the floor, or pretty much anything else, it's key. The time you spend on prep—whether it's 10 minutes to prime a piece of furniture or an hour to prime a room's trim—will pay off. "Priming seals the surface and gives the paint something to adhere to, so you get a much better, longer-lasting result," says Lucianna Samu. "You want to start with a surface that's clean, dry, dull (not glossy), and sound (no cracks, chips, or bubbles)," says Rick Watson, the director of product information at Sherwin-Williams.

HANDY HELPERS

Try these low-cost tools and tips from the pros for expert results.

1 ADJUSTABLE EXTENSION POLE

"This sturdy pole can double in size, so it's great for getting into tight spots or reaching the ceiling. Your roller screws onto the end." —*Brian Santos*

TO BUY: Shur-Line Easy-Reach 60-inch adjustable extension pole, $21, homedepot.com.

2 SANDING BLOCK

"Instead of holding the sandpaper in my hand, I use a sanding block—a hard piece of rubber, cork, or wood wrapped with sandpaper. It makes it easier to apply even pressure." —*Lucianna Samu*

TO BUY: Hyde Tools heavy-duty sanding block, $6, amazon.com.

3 EDGER

"Edgers help you reach corners and get a straight line along the edge of a ceiling. Avoid overloading it with paint, and keep your hand moving." —*Katharine Kaye McMillan*

TO BUY: Shur-Line 500 premium paint edger, $7, amazon.com.

4 CAULK

"During the prep stage, it's a good idea to caulk anywhere you see a black line, like between the trim and the wall, or any spot where old paint has cracked. It makes a finished job look better because even the best paint can't fill in a crack for long." —*Cheri Sparks*

TO BUY: 950A Siliconized acrylic-latex caulk, $2.50, sherwin-williams.com.

5 5-IN-1 TOOL

"I use the blade to smooth down the edge of painter's tape to get a tight seal. This tool is also my go-to for scraping paint, spreading putty, cleaning rollers, and more." —*Katharine Kaye McMillan*

TO BUY: Hyde Tools 5-in-1 painter's tool, $9, hydestore.com.

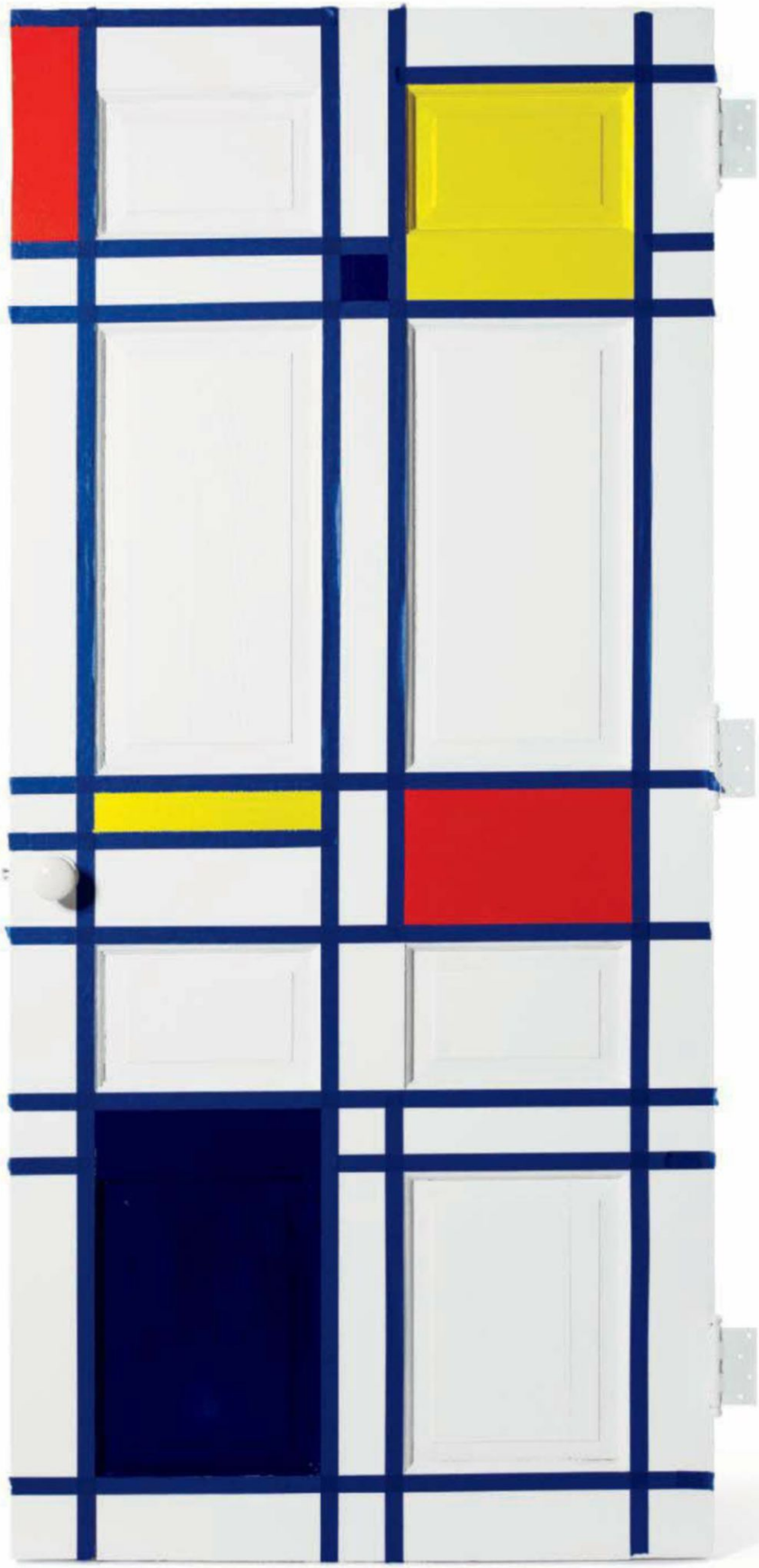
6 PLASTIC BUCKET

"I don't like to brush from the can. It's heavy to hold, and you'll contaminate your paint with dirt or wall matter every time you dip your brush in. Instead, pour a small amount of paint at a time into a bucket and work from that." —*Brian Santos*

TO BUY: Leaktite five-quart red plastic bucket, $8 for three, homedepot.com.

HOW-TO
PREP AND PRIME

STEP 1 Clean. Fill two gallon-size buckets with water—one cool, one warm. Add ¼ teaspoon dish-washing liquid to the warm water. Dip a sponge in the soapy water and wash the surface. Rinse with another sponge dipped in the cool water. Dry completely.
STEP 2 Smooth. Sand any high spots with 220-grit sandpaper. Fill any low spots, holes, or cracks with wall compound, wood filler, or caulk. Dry thoroughly, then sand smooth. Remove the sanding dust with a clean, damp cloth.
STEP 3 Apply the primer and let dry. This is an especially important step if you're painting an unpainted or stained surface, if you're in a mildew-prone area, or if you're painting a specialty surface (like ceramic tile or laminate). The primer will seal out stains, odors, or mildew and ensure proper bonding.



UH-OH!

I PAINTED ON A HOT DAY, AND NOW MY FRONT DOOR LOOKS ALL BUMPY.

You'll have to use a paint scraper to remove the blisters (bumps), then sand them smooth before starting over. This time, wait until the temperature is between 50 and 85 degrees Fahrenheit. Any colder or warmer than that and the paint may not bind together properly as it dries, which can cause blisters to form again. If you're painting inside, remember that humidity can make the paint take longer to dry; sealing doors and windows and setting up a fan in the room can help.

HOW TO PAINT IT

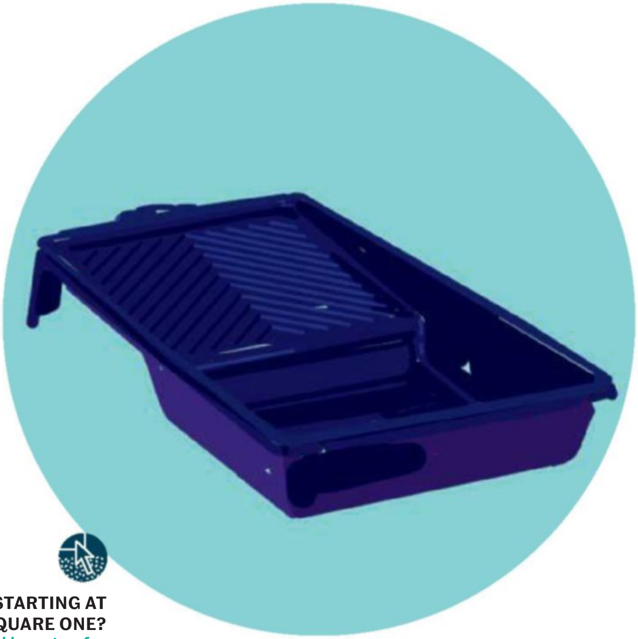
Follow these foolproof plans for painting anything and everything (beyond the walls*).

trim

Tape along edges where trim meets walls or other surfaces. Using an angled sash brush, first prime, then paint. Always move the brush in the direction of the wood grain (up and down if the trim is a vertical piece; side to side if it runs horizontally), covering 12 to 24 inches at a time. As you move to the next section, overlap your first stroke with the still-wet edge of the last one for a seamless result. Allow the first coat to dry (generally about an hour for latex paint); repeat.

ceiling

Starting in one corner, use an angled sash brush to cut in along the ceiling's edge, creating a strip about three inches wide by three feet long. This is a crucial step because a roller can't create a sharp line where the ceiling meets the wall. While the strip is still wet, switch to the roller, which will allow you to cover the surface much more easily and evenly. Use a zigzag pattern to paint three-foot-by-three-foot sections, overlapping each new section over the wet edge of the last one. (See How-To: Roll the Right Way, right.) Repeat the process along the entire surface.



***STARTING AT SQUARE ONE?**
Find how-tos for painting a wall at realsimple.com/walls.

floor

Prime, then apply two coats of paint, waiting for each coat to dry before applying the next one. Cut in a three-inch-by-three-foot strip along the edge. Then switch to a zigzag pattern using the roller. Remember: Don't paint yourself into a corner; figure out your escape route before you begin. Finish with a coat of clear acrylic polyurethane for extra durability.

front door

Rehanging a door can be tricky, so it's better to paint it in place. Pick a dry day when pollen levels are low or you'll end up with a coat of pollen dust stuck to your new paint. Use a plastic drop cloth and masking tape to seal the doorway from the outside so the door can stand open as you work and while it dries. Cover the hardware with painter's tape, or remove it. Wash the surface using a sponge dipped in soapy water, and rinse with a clean, damp cloth. Sand with 220-grit sandpaper, wipe away the dust with a damp rag, and let dry. Prime, then apply two coats of paint, brushing in the direction of the grain with a wood door.

HOW-TO

ROLL THE RIGHT WAY

Roll too hard and you'll get thin coverage and an orange-peel texture; too lightly and you'll get thick patches that could crack when dry.

STEP 1 Dip the roller about ½ inch into the paint tray, then roll against the tray's bumpy, angled section a few times to distribute the paint over the roller.

STEP 2 Apply the roller to the surface in a zigzag pattern (imagine that you're painting the letter *N, M,* or *W*), covering an area about three feet square and overlapping with the still-wet edge of the last area that you painted. Don't lean on the roller. The weight of the roller itself applies the perfect pressure to the surface.

STEP 3 Fill in and smooth out the zigzag with even, up-and-down strokes. You'll know that you are over-rolling or don't have enough paint on the roller when you hear a smacking or popping sound as you roll. After you have a filled-in three-foot square, move on to the next area.

kitchen cabinets

First make a map of the cabinet layout and number each unit on the map. Next, write the corresponding number on each door or drawer as you remove it so you'll know where each one goes when you're finished. (You can write the number on a small piece of tape or right on the surface—but don't paint over it.) Remove all the hardware and label that, too, if the sizes are different. Wash every piece to be painted with soap and water (as for a front door; see left). If there's a lot of grease buildup, clean with a concentrated stain remover, like Krud Kutter ($7, homedepot.com). Dry thoroughly. Rough up the surface with 220-grit sandpaper. Wipe away the dust with a damp cloth and let dry. Use an angled sash brush, a flat brush, or a small roller to apply primer and then two coats of paint, always following the grain of the wood. Allow each coat to dry completely before you begin the next; let the final coat dry fully (for at least a couple of days) before you rehang doors and replace drawers and hardware.

What do I need to know about lead paint?

If you live in a home built before 1978, scraping or sanding through old layers of paint could generate dust or fumes that contain lead, a very serious health risk, especially for children and pregnant women. Do a quick check first, using a DIY lead test kit (like 3M LeadCheck Instant Lead Test Swabs; $10.50 for two, homedepot.com). If the test detects lead, you'll need to find a contractor certified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to perform lead-paint abatement. Find one at epa.gov/lead.

HOW TO PAINT SPECIAL SURFACES

BRICK

Rub your hand over the surface. If white or red dust comes off, seal with a penetrating primer made for brick before painting. Apply two coats of latex paint using a low-nap roller to get a smooth finish, and cover the brick and the mortar with the same color.

METAL

If you don't know what type of metal you're painting, hold a magnet to it. If it sticks, the metal is ferrous and prone to rusting; coat it with a rust-inhibiting primer before painting. You can use a brush or a roller to paint, depending on the shape of the piece. Choose a paint or a primer that's formulated for use on metal.

LAMINATE

Clean the surface, then sand with 220-grit sandpaper. Wipe away dust with a damp cloth; dry thoroughly. Use a primer formulated for use on laminate, followed by two coats of high-quality eggshell or semigloss paint, which is more durable than flat paint. Allow the paint to cure (dry to maximum hardness) for at least a week before using the surface.

CERAMIC TILE

A caveat: Painted tile usually won't hold up for long in a wet area. And unless you have tons of time to tape every tile—or a super-steady hand—it's nearly impossible to paint the tile one color and the grout another. Your best bet is to paint it all white. Clean the tile, paying particular attention to areas around a sink, where invisible soap scum may have built up. Let dry overnight. Apply painter's tape where wall meets tile. Prime with a product formulated for ceramic tile, then paint with two coats of high-quality eggshell or semigloss.

HOW TO PAINT FURNITURE

indoor furniture

Wipe the piece with denatured alcohol to remove dirt or grease. You can skip the next step if the furniture you're painting is relatively free of dings and scratches (or if you don't mind some imperfections) and it has a dull finish. But if you're dealing with a beat-up surface or painting over a glossy surface (which is difficult for paint to stick to), sand first with a sanding sponge (a soft, flexible sander that can follow the contours of furniture), then wipe away the dust with a damp cloth. Turn the piece upside down and paint the underside first, starting with a primer formulated for the furniture material; or, if it's a wood piece that hasn't been painted before, choose a primer designed for bare wood (like Zinsser Bulls Eye 1-2-3 water-based primer; $19, walmart.com). Follow with two coats of paint in an eggshell or semigloss finish. Turn the piece over and do the top side. For a super-durable finish, spray with two coats of acrylic polyurethane once the paint is dry.

outdoor furniture

To paint wood furniture, follow the steps for indoor pieces, but use exterior paint in a semigloss finish, which is typically harder than flat finishes and allows dirt to be removed more easily. If you're painting furniture made of ferrous metal (see left), you'll need a primer that ensures adhesion and inhibits rust (Rust-Oleum Stops Rust Clean metal primer spray, for example), as well as either paint formulated for metal or a "universal" formula. Paint plastic furniture with a product made to bond to plastic (like Krylon Fusion for Plastic).

Can I paint an antique?

Sure, if you're not concerned about potentially ruining the authenticity and decreasing the piece's value—or if the piece isn't valuable. ("The word *antique* just means anything over 100 years old. Not all have intrinsic worth," says Katharine Kaye McMillan, a coauthor of *Do-It-Yourself Painting for Dummies*.) If you're taking the plunge, first figure out if the wood has been waxed. Use a dull knife or your fingernail to scrape the surface lightly. If a gummy surface balls up, it has been waxed, which means you need to sand the surface thoroughly (otherwise the paint won't stick). Start with 80-grit sandpaper, then work your way up to 120-grit until the surface is free of buildup. You can use the sandpaper's folded edges to get into any intricate carvings. Wipe thoroughly with a damp cloth. Prime and paint as you would for any other piece of furniture.

THE PAINT EXPERTS

KATHARINE KAYE McMILLAN, coauthor of *Do-It-Yourself Painting for Dummies* ▪ CARL MINCHEW, vice president of color innovation and design at Benjamin Moore ▪ CHRIS RICHTER, senior merchant of interior paint at the Home Depot ▪ LUCIANNA SAMU, color and DIY expert and paint educator at Benjamin Moore and Aubuchon Hardware ▪ BRIAN SANTOS, "the Wall Wizard," an author and industry expert ▪ CHERI SPARKS, owner of A Painting Company, in Denver ▪ STEPHANIE TULIGLOWSKI, artist and decorator in Joliet, Illinois ▪ DUSTIN VAN FLEET, interior designer and co-owner of Funk Living, in Tifton, Georgia ▪ RICK WATSON, director of product information at Sherwin-Williams ▪ DEBBIE ZIMMER, spokesperson for the Paint Quality Institute, a division of Dow

THE CLEANUP

Care for your brushes and roller covers the right way and they'll last for years.

DO'S AND DON'TS OF SPRAY PAINT

DO work outdoors, so you don't have to worry about ventilating the room or getting paint on other surfaces.
DO wear eye protection and a ventilator or a dust mask to keep paint from getting into your eyes, nose, and mouth.
DON'T get too close or you'll have uneven results. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how far to hold the can from the surface, and keep your arm and hand moving while painting.
DO use many coats—three or four thin ones instead of one thick coat—to avoid drips and patches.
DON'T rent a power sprayer. It may sound like a time-saver, but unless you're a pro, it can cause expensive damage within seconds if overspray ends up on nearby objects (like windows!).

brushes

CLEANING: Scrape excess paint against the edge of a tray or bucket. Fill a bucket or a sink with warm water and add a few drops of dish soap. Submerge the brush, spreading the bristles so the soapy water reaches the ferrule (the metal part). Scrub off dried paint on the handle or the ferrule with a nonscratch scouring pad. Rinse under cool water until the water runs clear. Spin the brush dry inside a bucket using your hands. (Or, for best results, use a brush spinner; sold at hardware stores.) Reshape the brush with your hands.
STORAGE: When the brush is dry, put it back in its "keeper" (cardboard packaging) to maintain its shape. Don't have it? Store the brush flat on its widest side.

rollers

CLEANING: Use the blade of a 5-in-1 tool to scrape excess paint from the roller, letting it drip back into the tray. Pull the roller cover off the cage and set the cage aside. Fill a sink with warm water and add a few drops of dish soap. Submerge the cover, kneading it with your hands to work the soapy water into the fibers. Rinse under cool water until the water runs clear. Squeeze out any excess, then stand the cover on end on top of a few paper towels to catch drips. Thread over a dowel or a line to dry. Wash the metal cage with dish soap. Use a nonscratch scouring pad to remove any dried paint. Rinse and pat dry.
STORAGE: Store in a dust-free cabinet. Be careful not to pile anything on top of the roller covers so you don't crush the nap.

roller tray

CLEANING: Skip the cleanup by using a disposable tray or a disposable plastic roller tray liner (about $2 at home centers), then discard it when the job is complete.

MADE A MESS? Don't stress. For water-based paint stains, rinse clothing in warm water, then launder as usual. For oil-based paint stains, treat with turpentine and rinse; then pretreat with detergent, rinse, and launder.

AS FOR THE LEFTOVER PAINT...

STORE IT

When stored correctly, leftover paint should last about one year. At the end of the project, wipe the rim of the can and lid, removing any excess paint that could prevent a tight seal. Stretch a piece of plastic wrap across the top of the can to keep out air and bacteria, so the paint doesn't dry out or become mildewed. Replace the lid, tapping around the edges with a hammer. (Put a folded rag between the metal top and the hammer so you don't damage the lid or keep it from sealing properly.) Store in an area, like a basement, that stays between 50 and 95 degrees Fahrenheit; that way, the paint won't freeze or get too hot.

DISCARD IT

Check with your municipality for recycling and disposal instructions; regulations vary widely. In many places, you can't throw paint out with the trash. And never pour paint down a drain or a sewer, because the chemicals can get into the water supply.

WHICH HUES TO CHOOSE? Find the pros' picks for foolproof colors for every room in the house at realsimple.com/paint.

THE REAL STORY ABOUT DIVORCE

Written by Abby Ellin
Photograph by David Hilliard

Divorces are like snowflakes. No two are exactly the same. But there's plenty of common territory in the emotions. *Real Simple* asked experts and women who've been there to share their most deep-down-introspective (and helpful) advice.

If you're in the middle of divorce (or have found your way to the other side), you don't need us to tell you that going through it is chaotic and consuming—a swirl of emotions and upheaval and logistics, with a rolling wave of pain regarding your kids, if you have them. Or that the experience is so specific to the details of your own life that it can feel like no one truly knows or understands. Point taken! Regardless, we wanted to see if we could help by rallying a sisterhood of real people and pros to share support—for those in the thick of a split, those concerned a breakup might be on the horizon, and those who just want to be a good friend to someone making her way through.

NOT EXACTLY YOUR BEST SELF

If you feel like you're losing your mind in the early stages of separation and divorce, maybe it helps to know that this is totally normal. Says Micki McWade, a New York–based clinical social worker and divorce coach and the author of *Getting Up, Getting Over, Getting On: A Twelve Step Guide to Divorce Recovery,* whether you're angry, hurt, relieved, terrified, or sliding back and forth on the emotional spectrum, it's common to feel out of control and disoriented. "You're not operating on the same level as you normally are," she explains. And under those conditions, the basic stuff of life—going to work, being a good parent—can feel like a steep uphill hike. "It's really difficult going from married to not," says Wendy Paris, the author of *Splitopia: Dispatches From Today's Good Divorce and How to Part Well.* Every concern looms large: your kids' well-being, the simple cost of keeping the lights on, your future. "Some people feel guilt, shame, a sense that they've failed," says Paris. Obviously this is no time to be without therapy. Get there (or get *back* there). "And know," continues Paris, "that the way you feel in the early days doesn't characterize the rest of your life."

UP AND OUT

You might think that you're not great company when you're consumed with all of the above. Doesn't matter. You'll return the favor when you're doing better. Right now, resist any urge to hole up alone. You need to reach out to friends. "Without support," says Amy Minkoff, a life coach in Pine Brook, New Jersey, "there's what you call 'drift'"—into behaviors that can make things worse (obsessing, despairing, overeating, overdrinking). "You need accountability," says Minkoff, from your close posse or from an official divorce support group.

Reach for some compassionate help with the legal aspects before you look up lawyers or mediators: Call a divorce coach, who can probably answer many of the questions keeping you awake at night and who can *definitely* break down the legal options. (Search for a local professional on collaborativepractice.com, or get a referral from friends.)

Social media can feel like a haven at a time like this, but be careful. In the case of a tough divorce, "what you do on Facebook is typically downloaded and entered into court documents," says Gregory C. Frank, the CEO and cofounder of Divorce Force.com. "If you say something online, it's there forever." The same holds true for e-mails. Frank advises you to "act as if the judge is always watching. Be very cautious."

REGAINING CONTROL

When you find yourself against the person you used to be with—especially as a parent—there's a huge and unsettling loss of control. "It's important to separate the things that you can impact from those that you can't," says McWade. When it comes to your ex, "the only thing you can do is be a good person," she says. "You can't control his or her behavior or perception, so don't even try. The main thing is to keep an eye on your own life and to move forward with dignity and integrity."

Make small moves that help you get ahead of anxiety. Pull together a list of professionals—from plumber to CPA—whom you'll need at some point. "Think about who's going to be your emergency responder if your kid has to go to the ER," adds Paris. "Give your house key to a friend." And don't let the wrong voices get in your head. "People are hugely opinionated about divorce," she says. Take what others say with a trough of salt (including, OK, magazines). Just because a vocal friend had a terrible divorce does not mean you will.

MAKING IT OK-ISH FOR THE KIDS

The concrete change in the lives of your kids is something you can really help with. "Children have a very different experience of divorce than their parents," points out McWade. "Parents are in their own homes. They're not, say, moving three days a week." Your new job (among many new jobs that come with divorce) is to

"It's really difficult going from married to not. But the way you feel in the early days of divorce doesn't characterize the rest of your life."

OPENING PAGES: *THREE* (2013)

make this back-and-forth as smooth as possible. Therapy can help, as can groups at school. (Ask the guidance counselor or school psychologist.) Keep any whiff of negativity away. (You're not as subtle as you think!)

"Regardless of what we may be going through, we have to suck it up for the kids," says McWade. If they forget something at their other home, take care of getting it so they feel no stress. And though you already know this, be careful not to turn your kids into messengers or spies. When they return from their dad's place, be upbeat and ask only casual questions, like you would when they come home from school. "Then make dinner or do homework," says McWade. If they don't feel like talking, leave them be. "Sometimes kids need to be alone," says McWade, who recommends a book by M. Gary Neuman called *Helping Your Kids Cope With Divorce the Sandcastles Way,* which explains the stages children go through during divorce.

FORWARD MARCH

After the big transition, divorce is an evolution. As with parenting, you never quite nail it, because it's always morphing. Says Joryn Jenkins, the author of *War or Peace: Avoid the Destruction of Divorce Court,* "You can't do much about what has happened, but you *can* have a significant impact on how your life plays out in the next minute, month, day, and year." Sometimes what was nourishing at the beginning becomes a burden. (Go ahead and dump that book club if you're dreading it now.) Be flexible, and if you have kids, work toward becoming a teammate with your co-parent (your ex, rebranded). "Focus on what you want instead of what you don't want," says Jenkins. That's a good mantra for a good divorce—and a good life. ■

"You can't control your ex's behavior or his perception, so don't even try. Keep an eye on your own life and move forward with dignity and integrity."

BEING A FRIEND TO SOMEONE GOING THROUGH DIVORCE

"It's hard to know exactly what kind of support someone wants in a divorce," says author Wendy Paris. "Your friend's desires can be hard to read or seem out of whack." She points to her own divorce and the conflicting needs it brought up: "I wanted support and encouragement. I wanted people to not feel sorry for me. I wanted people to *not* behave as if some terrible thing had happened. And yet I wanted them to make special allowances." Her advice is to be sensitive, present, and inclusive. "Listen without judgment. Invite your friend to dinner parties and other events." Don't exclude a friend because you think she won't want to come or because she's a downer. "So many newly divorced people feel really isolated," says Paris.

Also important, if you're the confidante of a friend in the midst of a divorce, don't discuss her situation with other people. It's easy enough to label this kind of talk as concern, but if you're saying something you wouldn't say right in front of her, it's gossip. Instead, be her protector. When people inquire, you can say, "She's doing OK. I'll let her know that you asked about her." Along the same lines, don't *bring* gossip (even in the name of "loyalty") to your friend. "People are often oddly eager to tell you what your ex says about you or what someone else said about your situation," says Paris. "That doesn't do any good."

What helps a lot, says Paris, is "anything that makes your friend feel empowered." That can mean anything from a trip to Ikea to fill in blanks left by the divorce to helping her come up with an "elevator speech" for times people ask about her breakup—because they *do* ask. And for those times when you don't know what she needs? "Ask."

TELL ME ABOUT IT

Real Simple hit up Facebook to ask women who've gone through divorce to share their personal experiences and advice on it.

(NAMES WITHHELD FOR MAXIMUM HONESTY.)

"If you're on good terms with your ex, it can be weird to stop working as a team. At the beginning, my ex and I were in and out of each other's homes all the time, dropping things off for the kids. It was just too much. Eventually it became clear that we needed a different system—a bench outside each of our front doors—for exchanging stuff. Drawing that line made a big difference." —M. W.

"We continue to do things like **birthdays, graduations, and recitals** together as a family. So they never have to decide who to sit with or where to go." —J. P.

"Know that things like open-school night with your ex the **first year will probably suck,** but that the second year it will be different. And by the third, you'll have figured out something. Everyone does, whether it's being friendly and sitting together or totally avoiding each other." —K. C.

"Find some kind of spiritual or positive nourishment. I listened to Joel Osteen and other books on tape. I'm not religious, but he helped me focus on something other than anxiety and hurt." —B. D.

"In the beginning, stay away from social media, which is populated by the happiest people in the best marriages with the most successful children." —E. M.

"If your ex is angry at the beginning, just count on his getting angrier during the proceedings. The worst part of him has taken over his brain. You think he still remembers how you used to sing silly songs in the car together. Maybe he'll remember in a few years, maybe never, but certainly not now." —J. A.

"Don't talk trash about your ex. It makes you look stupid for marrying him, and makes your kids feel like they have mutant genes. Disagree respectfully." —D. B.

"Take the higher road any chance you get." —S. J.

"Find a good shrink and figure out what really went wrong and how not to repeat history." —S. K.

"I WAS DRAWN TO SUPPORT CLASSES. I CRAVED BEING WITH OTHERS WHO WERE ALSO LICKING THEIR WOUNDS, AND I ENDED UP LEARNING THE BEST, MOST HELPFUL GUIDING PRINCIPLES DURING THESE CLASSES." —M. S.

"If you know a couple who have a good divorce, it's really useful to learn what kinds of boundaries they have, because you're going to have to try out different things until you find what feels right." —H. K.

"It takes a while to feel OK on your own, and the loneliness can be crushing. Observe yourself and notice what times and days and activities (or inertia) send you into a despair pit, and manage that. For me, it was those weekends I didn't have my kids, from 5 P.M. till 8 P.M. I would just be so, so sad. So I started doing things right in that sweet (or bitter) spot, like seeing a movie at the art house near me—killing that patch of time. And then I'd find I'd be OK. Oh, and also I went on Lexapro. :)" —D. B.

"What helped me through my divorce: stretching myself into unfamiliar territory by enrolling in hard classes with brilliant teachers on cognitive neuroscience, theories of personality, and abnormal psychology; having some very good friends who could sit with me on the phone while I fell apart; listening to audiobook fiction; and relying on a power other than myself or any other human." —B. J.

"At holiday time, don't try to replicate every tradition. Honor the holidays and celebrations you always did, but allow yourself new ways to do this, reflecting the new realities that often include less time and money. Create some new traditions, too, for yourself and your children." —E. M.

"My mom advised me not to talk to my mother-in-law about [my ex]. Not one negative word. She reminded me that my mother-in-law was already hurting and to remember that she is my three kids' grandma. This was 22 years ago, and as a result, I have maintained a great relationship with her all the while, which has had a wonderful impact on my children (and on me and her)." —S. J.

"You're going to try some things that fail. I tried this idea of having back-and-forth bags—big L.L. Bean totes for the kids that were supposed to make it easier to haul things from one house to the other. But eventually these bags became big, clunky reminders of a lot of sadness from the beginning of the divorce that had dissipated. I got rid of them." —R. K.

"So many people **rush right into dating** to fill the void or to soothe dented egos. My support-group facilitator asked us to resist any partner relationships for this first year and, instead, spend time and energy strengthening bonds with friends and family members who would be our rocks during difficult days ahead. It was great advice." —M. S.

"Divorce is, among other things, a grieving process of what could have been. It takes time and active participation to move through it—and that can be scary." —D. S.

"I told my kids [that **I was going to start dating**] about six months after the separation. I felt like I should. I said, 'Do you have any feelings about that?' My 10-year-old said, 'I'm glad, Mom, so you have something to do when we're not here.' And he also asked me if I would please not date anyone in our small town, because 'Alex's mom and Elise's dad dated and broke up, and now it's really weird for them on the school bus.' I said, 'Of course,' and he was happy." —L. L.

"If you have shared custody, try as much as possible to transition through the school and not face-to-face. Don't make the kids take a loyalty test every time they go from one parent to the other." —C. R.

"I live two blocks from my ex, and some people think that's nuts. But it absorbs a little of the discomfort my kids have in living in two places. Whenever there's a chance to absorb some of the discomfort of that inconvenience, I try to take that on." —L. P.

"For those who divorce late, with adult children, don't try to justify yourself to your children. Divorce, no matter how old the 'kids' are, is painful for everyone. No matter how aware your children are of the difficulties between their parents, they want an intact family and may react with anger. Allow them their feelings, and don't try to be a hero or a saint." —E. M.

"My daughter was 13 at the time the divorce began. My only regret was not being able to see through the fog at the time to realize that she took on too much of the 'soothing mom' responsibilities during those first penniless weeks and months. Burdening her with my grief didn't allow her to have her own." —M. S.

"My teenage son said to me one day, 'Mom, I realized all my close friends are from broken homes.' It was so jarring, this phrase, and I thought, *Yeah, that is his to describe however he wants.* I wish he hadn't used those words, but it's his experience. I guess what I want to say is that we can do backflips to make it as OK as possible for our kids, but they have their own experience of divorce, and that is not something you should try to edit or change." —R. T.

"THERE'S A WAY TO OFFER SUPPORT THAT FEELS SINCERE, AND THERE ARE A LOT OF WAYS THAT DON'T. INSTEAD OF SAYING, 'WELL, IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO...' AND JUST TRAILING OFF, OFFER A CONCRETE KINDNESS: 'LET ME PICK UP JIMMY AT T-BALL AND TAKE THE KIDS FOR ICE CREAM WHILE YOU'RE AT THAT APPOINTMENT.' THAT'S HUGE." —S. P.

"If you bad-mouth the guy your friend has been married to for 15 years, she won't feel supported. She'll feel betrayed. If you hate him so much, what have you been thinking about her all these years for marrying him?" —F. L.

"In my experience, the right thing to—very gently and kindly and empathetically—ask a mother who has just told you she's getting a divorce is 'How are the kids doing?' For me, that was the only thing on my mind, and I was so grateful to be understood. The wrong thing is to talk about your own personal feelings: *I knew something was wrong. I never would have pictured it. I can't imagine how I would ever survive if Bob and I broke up.* Basically anything that starts with *I*." —G. M.

"The phrase 'I'm sorry' can be very distancing or very compassionate, depending on how it's delivered." —D. M.

"The hardest thing is that you spend your whole adult life trying to protect your kids from hurt, and then you do this thing—because you absolutely have to and you have no choice—and it hurts them more than anything in their lives ever has. It's tough to reconcile that." —L. W.

"In the first year, when the only thing on your mind is all the change in your life, it's hard not to talk about your divorce on a date. That's a good reason to wait. Later, believe it or not, you're just a person, and **divorce is something you've been through, not something that defines you."** —T. S.

"Have a friend help you with **online dating,** if you decide to go there. Don't be embarrassed to ask for help. It's better with company!" —A. G.

"Some people will fix you up in the most thoughtless way—don't let them. Married fixer-uppers can be careless and messy. One friend of mine compared it to animal husbandry. You can check out the guy online, and you can politely decline. Your singleness doesn't belong to anyone but you." —P. N.

EAT THIS NOW

WHAT DO YOU SERVE WITH WHATEVER'S ON THE GRILL? A SIDE OF PURE SUMMER.

Story and Recipes by Sarah Copeland
Photographs by Johnny Miller
Food Styling by Susan Spungen
Set Design by Jeffrey W. Miller

GRILLED KALE
AND ESCAROLE
CAESAR SALAD

BEETS WITH
CRÈME FRAÎCHE,
SHALLOT,
AND PISTACHIOS

GRILLED KALE AND ESCAROLE CAESAR SALAD

ACTIVE TIME **15 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **15 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**

- 1 garlic clove
- ¾ tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 1 large egg yolk
- ½ tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1½ Tbsp. fresh lemon juice, divided
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese, divided
- 1 large bunch kale (about 12 oz.), tough stems removed
- 1 small head escarole (about 12 oz.), leaves torn

PREHEAT the grill to high. Finely chop the garlic on top of ¼ teaspoon of the salt; press the mixture with the flat side of the knife to make a paste. Whisk together the garlic paste, egg yolk, mustard, and 1 tablespoon of the lemon juice in a medium bowl. Slowly add 1 tablespoon of the olive oil, whisking constantly. Slowly add the vegetable oil, whisking constantly. Stir in the pepper, 3 tablespoons of the Parmesan, and the remaining ½ tablespoon of lemon juice and ½ teaspoon of salt.

TOSS the kale and escarole with the remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Arrange the greens on oiled grill grates. Grill, uncovered, until lightly charred on the edges, 1 to 2 minutes, turning once. Coarsely chop and arrange on a platter. Drizzle with the dressing and sprinkle with the remaining Parmesan.

This salad makes a light main dish, too. Serve it with hunks of buttered, grilled baguette. (Who says you have to be grilling meat?)

MOZZARELLA, SALAMI, AND OLIVE SALAD

ACTIVE TIME **10 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **10 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**

- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. honey
- 1 tsp. lemon zest, plus 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice (from 1 lemon)
- 1 lb. fresh mozzarella cheese, torn or sliced
- 6 oz. thinly sliced salami (about 20 slices)
- ⅓ cup green olives, pitted
- ½ cup loosely packed fresh mint leaves, torn
- ½ tsp. flaky sea salt (such as Maldon)
- ¼ tsp. black pepper

WHISK together the oil, honey, and lemon juice. Divide the mozzarella, salami, olives, and mint among 4 plates. Drizzle with the dressing; sprinkle with the lemon zest, salt, and pepper. Serve at room temperature.

BEETS WITH CRÈME FRAÎCHE, SHALLOT, AND PISTACHIOS

ACTIVE TIME **10 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **45 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**

- 2 bunches beets (about 1½ lb.), tops trimmed
- 3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. red wine vinegar
- ½ tsp. flaky sea salt (such as Maldon)
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- ½ cup crème fraîche
- 1 shallot, thinly sliced (about ¼ cup)
- ¼ cup roasted, salted, shelled pistachios, roughly chopped

BRING the beets and enough water to cover to a boil in a large saucepan. Cook until fork-tender, 10 to 20 minutes, depending on size. Drain and cool.

WHISK together the oil, vinegar, salt, and pepper.

USE a paper towel to rub the skins off the beets; cut into wedges. Spread the crème fraîche on a serving platter or each of 4 plates. Top with beets, shallot, and pistachios. Drizzle with the dressing and serve at room temperature.

Crème fraîche gives this dish a richness that's just right for meaty beets and sharp shallots. Sour cream would work, too.

DINNER IS READY
Pair these summer sides with easy grilled fish and meats. Go to realsimple.com/grilling.

BEEFSTEAK TOMATO BREAD SALAD

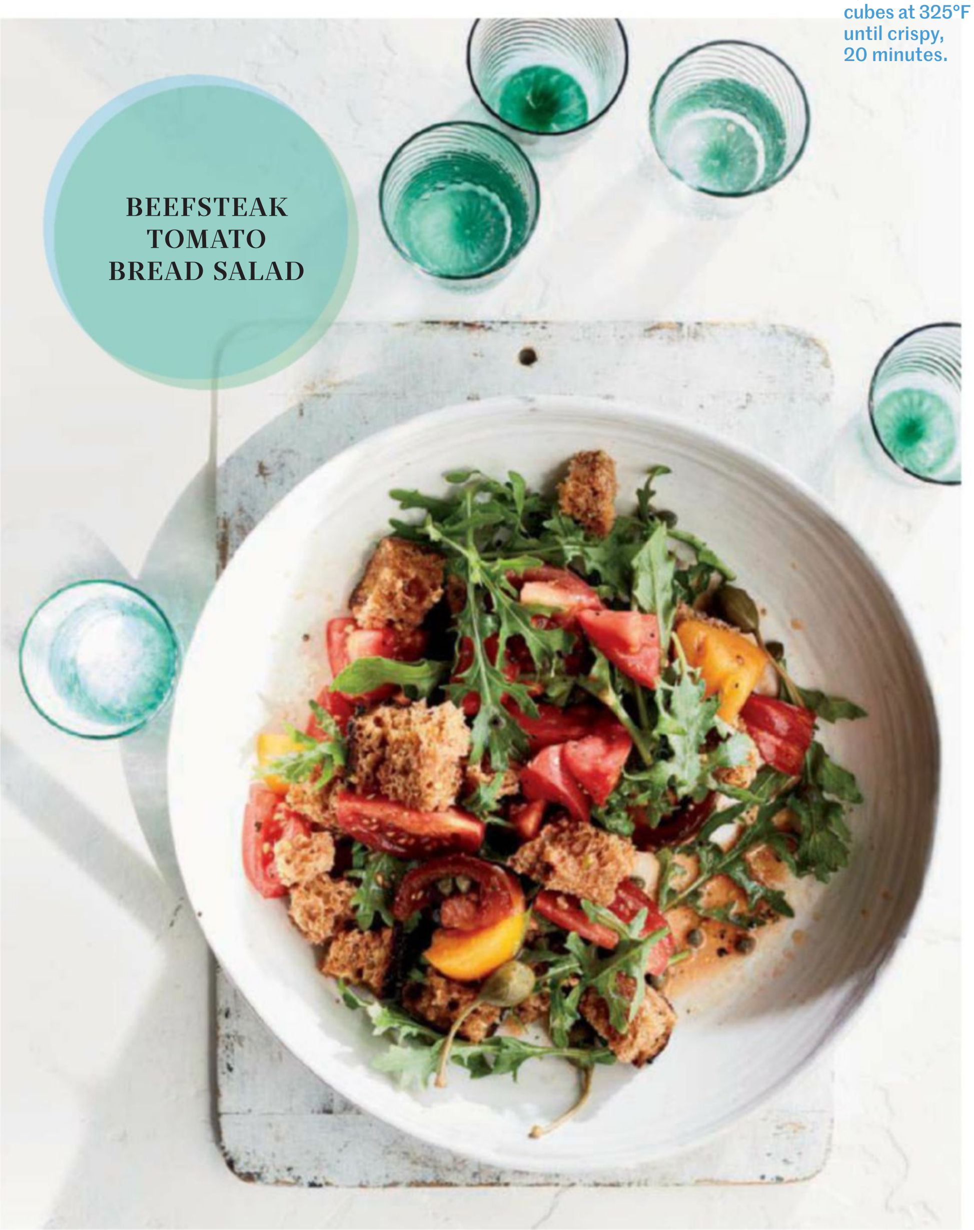
ACTIVE TIME **10 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **40 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**

- 1 3.5-oz. jar capers
- 1½ lb. beefsteak tomatoes, chopped
- ⅓ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- ¾ lb. stale dense whole-grain bread, cut into 1-in. chunks
- 3 oz. baby arugula

COMBINE the capers and the brine from the jar, tomatoes, oil, salt, and pepper in a large bowl. Let stand until the tomatoes release their juices, about 10 minutes.

ADD the bread and toss to coat. Let the salad stand, tossing occasionally, until the bread softens slightly and soaks up some of the tomato liquid, about 20 minutes. Toss with the arugula just before serving.

This recipe depends on fully stale bread (fresh will get mushy). To fake it, toast the cubes at 325°F until crispy, 20 minutes.



BEEFSTEAK TOMATO BREAD SALAD

SUGAR SNAP PEAS WITH LEMON RICOTTA, MINT, AND PARSLEY

ACTIVE TIME **10 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **10 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**

- ½ lb. fresh ricotta cheese (about 1 cup)
- 1 tsp. lemon zest
- 1 lb. fresh sugar snap peas, trimmed and halved
- ¼ cup loosely packed fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves
- ¼ cup loosely packed fresh mint leaves, torn
- ½ tsp. flaky sea salt (such as Maldon)
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling (optional)

STIR together the ricotta and lemon zest. Toss together the snap peas, parsley, mint, salt, pepper, and oil. Dollop about ¼ cup of the ricotta mixture onto each of 4 plates. Top each plate with about 1⅓ cups of the snap pea mixture. Drizzle with additional oil, if desired.

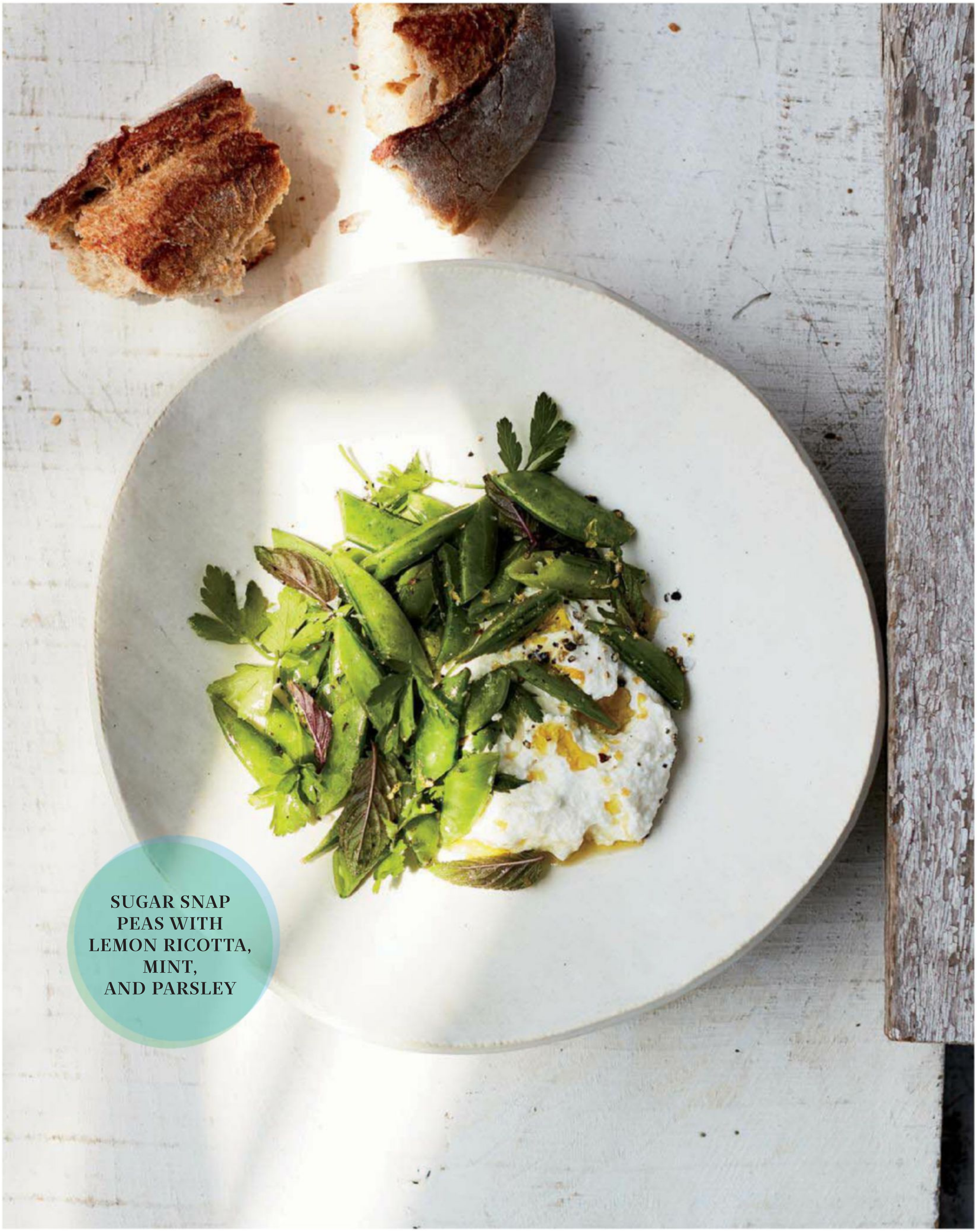
ZUCCHINI, RADISH, AND WHITE BEAN SALAD

ACTIVE TIME **8 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **8 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**

- 2 small zucchini (about 13 oz.), thinly sliced
- 5 radishes (about 6 oz.), thinly sliced
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- 1 (15-oz.) can great Northern beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 bunch watercress (about 8 oz.), trimmed

This recipe works with any kind of creamy bean (try butter beans or garbanzos) and all types of radishes. Mix and match all summer long.

TOSS together the zucchini, radishes, oil, lemon juice, salt, and pepper in a large bowl. Add the beans and watercress and toss to coat. Serve at room temperature.



SUGAR SNAP PEAS WITH LEMON RICOTTA, MINT, AND PARSLEY

ZUCCHINI, RADISH, AND WHITE BEAN SALAD

Written by Jane Borden, Liz Loerke, Elizabeth Passarella, and Ingela Ratledge

Photographs by Tom Schierlitz

BACK TO SCHOOL? BE COOL.

THIS EIGHT-STEP GUIDE WILL HELP YOU GET ORGANIZED, MANAGE STRESS (YOURS *AND* YOUR KIDS'), AND REMIND YOU THAT **IT'S ALL GOING TO BE A-OK.**

1

PREPARE FOR ALL THE #%@*#! PAPER

KNOW THYSELF. Don't be seduced by the 42-part cubby system you saw on Pinterest if you are a dump-it-in-a-drawer type of person. "We have a whiteboard. Do you know what's written on it? Last summer's schedule," says Erin Doland, an organizer in Washington, D.C., and the author of *Never Too Busy to Cure Clutter.* **GET A SCANNER.** It's easy to digitize health forms and school reports and save them to your phone or computer. (Doland loves the Fujitsu ScanSnap.) You need easier? "I use an app called Tiny Scanner that turns a picture of a document—that you snap with your phone—into a PDF," says Alexis Gendron Lefort, a mother of two in Hingham, Massachusetts.
BUY BINS. One for each kid. Doland uses plastic ones that are "about legal-pad size and a foot tall" for her two kids. In go artwork and work sheets; when it's full (which happens two or three times a year, says Doland), they weed out.
MAKE IN-BOXES. Use a simple cardboard sorter with a slot for each family member. "Kids are responsible for putting things in (like forms that need to be signed) and taking them out," says Doland. Consider getting a restaurant "spike" to set nearby to hold important receipts.
BAN THE BULLETIN BOARD. "With so much online, it makes more sense to have an iPad stuck to the wall," says Doland. Reduce visual clutter (e.g., 47 flapping sheets) by accessing phone lists and lunch calendars digitally. If you want to see the family's schedule at a glance, try Cozi (owned by Time Inc., the parent company of *Real Simple*), which has a shared calendar. If you want a hard copy, stick to one large master wall calendar. ML Nichols, the author of *The Parent Backpack for Kindergarten Through Grade 5,* recommends an 18-by-24-inch size with lined boxes. Write each family member's schedule in a different-color ink.

2

Put these things in your phone ASAP

SCHOOL CALENDAR
Mark days off, early dismissals, your own vacations, and any events that you know in advance. "Set an alert the day before if you have to bring food," says Kirsten Earl, a professional crafter and set decorator and a mother of two in South Orange, New Jersey.

NURSE'S NUMBER
Plus those of the main office and the guidance counselor. "I once ignored a call because I didn't recognize the number. It was the nurse calling to say that my son had fallen off the monkey bars," says Earl.

KEYWORDS
In your contacts list, add "soccer" or "car pool" next to the parents linked to that activity. When you have to send out a text about practice and can't remember Ann Whatshername, just search "soccer" and she'll pop up, says Asha Dornfest, the author of *Parent Hacks.*

3

PREP TALKING POINTS FOR...

ANXIETY. Time to separate, little kindergartner. "Ask what she thinks will be the same as last year and what will be different," says Deborah Gilboa, a family physician and the author of *Get the Behavior You Want... Without Being the Parent You Hate!* "When it's put into those terms, many little kids can then express what they are worried about." With a kid who might be anxious but isn't saying anything, "pay attention when family members or friends ask about school," says Gilboa. "Kids may give other people information that they don't share with their parents."
FRENEMIES. Brainstorm potential solutions. "OK, if you try to talk to Abby by the lockers in front of everybody, what would that look like? How do you think you would feel? What if you didn't wait until the first day to deal with it? What about talking to her on a bike ride before school starts?" When your child feels that she's a problem-solver, she'll be more confident.
BULLYING. Do more than talk; go over a plan. "If X, Y, or Z happens, make a beeline for this office/library, etc.," says Gilboa. "If your child has been bullied in the past, go over the solutions that were put into place and explain how important it is for him to tell you what's going on at school, good and bad."
BAD ATTITUDES. "I tell my kids, 'I get it. It's really hard to go back after the summer. I feel the same way after every single vacation, and I love my job,'" says Dornfest. Once you've shown some empathy, you can go back to a little rah-rahing about how great everything will be.

TIP
Know what you always forget until the first storm? Rain boots. (The same holds for snow gear.) Buy them now.

4

TO DRY-RUN OR NOT TO DRY-RUN? TWO PROS WEIGH IN

YEA
"You need to practice. Plays take practice. Dance recitals take practice. People do not realize the impact of going back to school from a life-management perspective. Wake your kids up, see how long it takes them to get dressed and eat breakfast, how long it takes to drive them to school. Time it. However much time you think you need, it's going to be more."

—**ALLYSON LEWIS,** AUTHOR OF *THE 7 MINUTE SOLUTION*

NO WAY
"I go cold turkey. Maybe I would notice a difference in my kids' efficiency if I did a dry run. But, honestly, at the end of the school year, when they've been waking up early and going through the routine for nine months, they are still pains in the rear about it."

—**JENNIFER JACOBS,** PRESIDENT OF THE PTA AT THE DAVID D. JONES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, IN GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

OPENING PAGES: PROP STYLING BY LINDEN ELSTRAN

5 SIMPLIFY SUPPLY SHOPPING

FIRST check if your child's school allows you to order the whole kit and caboodle for her grade through a third party or Amazon. (This option sometimes has a deadline, so check that, too.)

IF NOT, don't stress out about having to get everything on the list for day one. "A lot of teachers will provide a list of supplies specific to their classroom on the first day," says Margaret Kenny, an English teacher at Polytechnic School, in Pasadena, California. "I schedule two hours to go to Staples that first week of school."

ASK FOR SKUs. If teachers have the SKUs for items (don't bet on this, but ask), it can make shopping easier. "You don't realize how many types of markers there are until you're trying to find a specific one at Target. If you have the SKU, you can search for it and buy it online—with a glass of wine in your hand," says Lefort.

HE STILL HASN'T CRACKED *1984?*

Figure out how many pages he has left and divide that by the remaining days of summer, says Dornfest: "It's easier to digest when it's in smaller portions."

TIP
Alarm clocks take time to get used to. If you want your tween to wake up on her own, start practicing early. (No snoozing!)

6 Help your overscheduled teen stay sane

DO SOME MATH
To combat the wails of "I don't have enough *tiiiime!*" try this: Determine the hours in a week (24 x 7 = 168). Subtract hours spent sleeping, at school, and doing activities. "Students begin to realize that there are a lot of available hours being sucked up by YouTube and social media," says Tracey Addington, the director of a college-readiness program at the Parish Episcopal School, in Dallas, and a mother of three.

DON'T OFFER SOLUTIONS
"Students are rarely looking for an answer. They want to be heard and validated," says Adriana Cornell, a school counselor in Philadelphia and a member of the American Counseling Association (ACA). Also, jumping into action with an onslaught of possible solutions can exacerbate stress. "Take a moment and say, 'That sounds really stressful. What can I do to help?'" says Cornell. "Be an ally, not a challenger."

ASK WHAT'S ANNOYING
Really, go ahead. Ask your teenager what you do that is helpful and what you do that is not. Says Cornell, "Allow her to say that when you nag about a test every day leading up to it, she gets stressed to the point of rebellion, then deliberately doesn't study just to feel in control."

MAKE A LIST
Have your child write down all of her assignments, then ask if she wants your help prioritizing. "If all of the tasks hold equal importance, encourage her to start with one or two that she can finish fairly quickly," says Cornell. "Crossing off tasks will allow her to feel more productive and motivated as she tackles others."

7 SPECIAL PANIC SECTION: OMG! MY KID IS A SENIOR THIS YEAR

Write the college essay now. Er, have your child write the essay. (See Give Them Control, below.) Some colleges accept applications as early as August 1 and have deadlines in mid-October. More than 600 schools accept the Common Application, and the essay specs are already available. "Knock it out over the summer," says Addington. "A lot of high schools offer summer writing workshops. Take advantage of them."

Create a brag sheet. "In my experience, overachieving students often struggle to recognize their accomplishments," says Cornell. Brian Law, a Georgia-based school counselor and ACA member, recommends making a "brag sheet" (a.k.a. a résumé) to help when asking teachers for recommendations.

Crowdsource. Is your kid struggling to come up with a list of schools? Encourage him to talk to college students in your community, says Addington: "Find out how they started their searches. Was it financial considerations? Geography? A current student not only can share the reality of life on campus but also is likely to have a perspective on 'best fit' that adults miss."

Give them control. You're not the one applying. "It's the students' job to consider their options, write their essays, and get the applications in on time," says Cornell. "Dragging your child to your goal will only breed resentment."

8 AND FINALLY, DON'T STRESS OUT ABOUT…

DINNER
The first week, anyway. "The change of schedule is totally exhausting. Buy pre-prepped or frozen meals," says Earl. "And have some adult creature comforts: good coffee and clean sheets."

VOCABULARY DRILLS
Or flash cards. "Everyone spends that first month of school getting their bearings," says Tara Falsani, an attorney and a mother of two in Minneapolis. "Nothing is going to change that."

HER TEACHER…
"Parents get really worked up about getting their kid in with the 'best' teacher," says Gilboa. "Resist the urge to agitate for change. Have faith that kids will benefit from learning how to handle whatever is thrown their way."

…OR HER CLASSMATES
"Kids make new friends quickly. Don't worry if she isn't with her best friend," says Ilene Bergenfeld, an executive for Juicy Juice and a mother of three in Westchester County, New York.

FIRST-DAY PICTURES
"I never took pictures of my kids on the first day of school past… maybe preschool? And I don't regret it. And they still love me," says Bergenfeld.

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Easy Smoked Sausage Skillet

Serving Size: 4-6 Total Time: 20 minutes

Ingredients :

1 pkg. Hillshire Farm® smoked sausage, diagonally sliced thin
2 cloves garlic, crushed
¼ cup olive oil
1 large red bell pepper, sliced thin
1 small yellow onion, sliced thin
1 pkg. frozen broccoli, thawed
½ cup chicken broth (or water)
½ cup tomato sauce
2 cups instant rice
½ cup shredded Mozzarella cheese

Instructions :

Heat olive oil and garlic in skillet, stir in smoked sausage slices and cook until browned. Add pepper, onion, broccoli, broth and tomato sauce and simmer for 10 minutes until the vegetables are tender and the liquid is absorbed. In the meantime, prepare rice according to package instructions. Stir rice into the skillet, sprinkle with cheese and serve.

Visit HillshireFarm.com/recipes for delicious recipes perfect for any night of the week.

Food

Quick Cooking (168, 169, 179, 180, 182, 184, 186, 195, 198)
Healthy Pick (168, 169, 179, 180, 182, 195, 198)
Make Ahead (180)
Whole-Grain (169, 195)
Vegetarian (168, 169, 184, 195, 198)
Gluten-Free (168, 169, 182, 195, 198)

CHOICE CUT

Hanger steaks used to be considered too small to display in cases, so butchers kept them for themselves. Then people wised up: It's super tender, and it cooks quickly on the grill (page 182).

QUICK TIP

LOOK FOR "NONPAREIL" CAPERS, WHICH ARE THE SMALLEST, MOST TENDER VARIETY.

3 DAYS

THAT'S ALL THE TIME YOU HAVE BEFORE CILANTRO STARTS TO WILT IN THE REFRIGERATOR. (MAKE MORE QUESADILLAS—PAGE 184.)

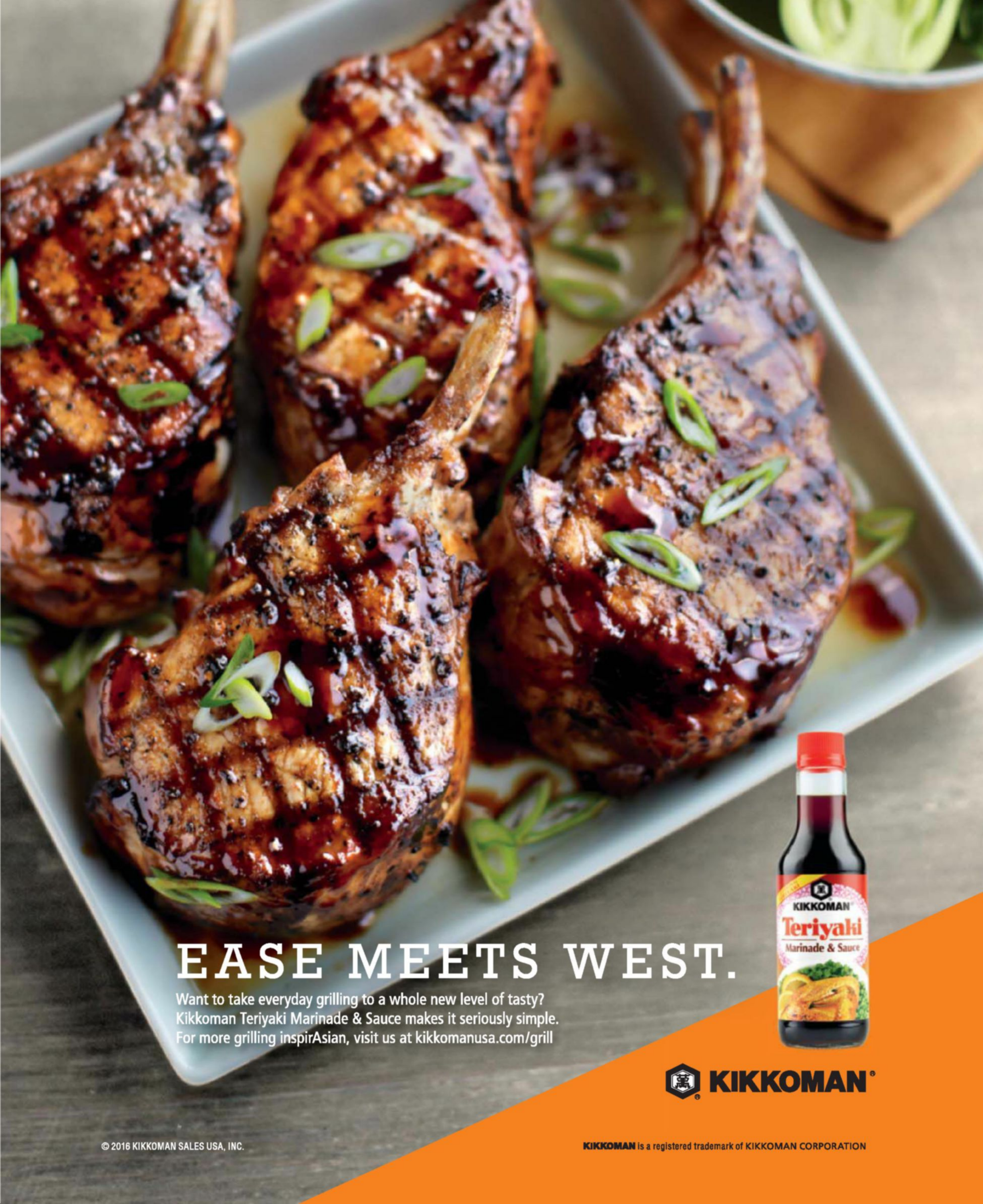
THIS IS NUTS

Ever cracked a peanut shell and wondered how the nut inside is already salty? (No, they don't grow that way.) Whole peanuts are submerged in brine, which permeates the shells and then evaporates, leaving salt behind.

Photographs by Jen Causey

Food Styling by Kellie Gerber Kelley

PROP STYLING BY CLAIRE SPOLLEN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Quick Cooking (X)
Healthy Pick (X)
Freezable ( )
Make Ahead ( )
Big Batch ( )
Slow Cooker ( )
One Pot ( )
Whole-Grain ( )
Vegetarian ( )
Gluten-Free ( )
Family-Friendly (X)

EASY DINNER

1

Seared salmon noodles with scallions

ACTIVE TIME **25 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **25 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

- 12 oz. udon noodles, uncooked
- ¼ cup rice wine vinegar
- 1½ Tbsp. sesame oil
- ¼ cup plus 2 tsp. canola oil, divided
- 6 oz. snow peas, thinly sliced (about 2¼ cups)
- 2 carrots, thinly sliced
- 1¼ lb. skinless salmon fillet, cut into 4 equal portions
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- ½ cup roughly chopped roasted, salted peanuts
- ¼ cup thinly sliced scallions

COOK the noodles according to the package directions; drain and rinse.

COMBINE the vinegar, sesame oil, and 3½ tablespoons of the canola oil in a large bowl. Add the noodles, snow peas, and carrots; toss to combine.

HEAT the remaining canola oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high. Add the salmon and sprinkle with the salt; cook 1 minute. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook until golden brown on the bottom and mostly cooked through, about 4 minutes. Turn and cook 2 minutes. Transfer to a plate; let cool slightly.

DIVIDE the noodles evenly among 4 plates. Top with the salmon and sprinkle evenly with the peanuts and scallions.

Recipes by
Julia Levy

FOOD

- [x] Quick Cooking
- [x] Healthy Pick
- [ ] Freezable
- [x] Make Ahead
- [ ] Big Batch
- [ ] Slow Cooker
- [ ] One Pot
- [ ] Whole-Grain
- [ ] Vegetarian
- [ ] Gluten-Free
- [x] Family-Friendly

EASY DINNER

2

Eggplant and chicken caponata pizza

ACTIVE TIME **15 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **30 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

FOOD

- 1 small eggplant (such as Japanese eggplant)
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 1 lb. prepared pizza dough, at room temperature
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 8 oz. fresh mozzarella, sliced
- ½ cup shredded rotisserie chicken
- ⅓ cup roasted red bell pepper slices
- 2 tsp. capers
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt
- 2 tsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

PLACE a pizza stone or baking sheet in oven. Preheat oven to 450°F. Using a vegetable peeler, peel thin strips from the eggplant until you reach the seeds. Discard the seedy core.

HEAT 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high. Add the eggplant and cook, stirring constantly, until tender, about 2 minutes.

PLACE the pizza dough on a sheet of parchment paper. Stretch or roll the dough into a 14-inch circle. Combine the garlic and the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil in a small bowl; brush evenly over the dough. Lay the mozzarella over the dough, leaving a ¾-inch border. Top the mozzarella evenly with the eggplant, chicken, bell pepper, and capers. Sprinkle with the salt. Slide the pizza on the parchment onto the hot pizza stone or baking sheet.

BAKE until the mozzarella is melted and the crust is golden brown and crispy, about 15 minutes. Drizzle with the lemon juice and sprinkle with the parsley.

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- [x] Quick Cooking
- [x] Healthy Pick
- [ ] Freezable
- [ ] Make Ahead
- [ ] Big Batch
- [ ] Slow Cooker
- [ ] One Pot
- [ ] Whole-Grain
- [ ] Vegetarian
- [x] Gluten-Free
- [x] Family-Friendly

EASY DINNER

3

Grilled hanger steak with green bean and sweet pepper slaw

ACTIVE TIME **20 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **20 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

- 3 Tbsp. fresh lime juice (from 3 limes)
- ¾ tsp. kosher salt
- 5 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
- ¼ cup thinly sliced red onion
- 4 oz. haricots verts (French green beans), thinly sliced
- 6 small bell peppers, thinly sliced into rings (about 1¼ cups)
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh cilantro
- 1½ lb. hanger steak, center membrane removed, cut into 4 equal pieces
- ½ tsp. black pepper

PREHEAT grill to high. Stir together the lime juice, salt, and ¼ cup of the oil in a small bowl. Add the onion and let stand at least 10 minutes. Add the haricots verts, bell peppers, and cilantro; toss to combine.

MEANWHILE, sprinkle the steak with the black pepper and drizzle with the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil. Grill until an instant-read thermometer inserted in the center of each piece registers 130°F, 5 to 7 minutes per side for medium-rare. Let stand 5 minutes; cut against the grain into thin slices. Serve with the slaw.

DINNER, MADE EASY
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- [x] Quick Cooking
- [ ] Healthy Pick
- [ ] Freezable
- [ ] Make Ahead
- [ ] Big Batch
- [ ] Slow Cooker
- [ ] One Pot
- [ ] Whole-Grain
- [x] Vegetarian
- [ ] Gluten-Free
- [x] Family-Friendly

EASY DINNER

4

Quesadillas poblano

ACTIVE TIME **30 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **30 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

- 2½ Tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 2 medium poblano chiles, thinly sliced (about 2½ cups)
- 1 cup sliced white onion (from ½ onion)
- 1 (15-oz.) can pinto beans, drained and rinsed
- 8 (8-in.) flour tortillas
- 8 oz. shredded Monterey Jack cheese (about 2 cups)
- 5 radishes, thinly sliced
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lime juice (from 1 lime)
- ¾ tsp. kosher salt
- 1 ripe avocado, sliced
- ¼ cup cilantro leaves

HEAT 1 tablespoon of the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high. Add the poblanos and onion. Cook, stirring occasionally, until tender, about 10 minutes; transfer to a bowl. Wipe the skillet clean. Add the beans to the poblano mixture in the bowl; roughly mash with a fork to combine.

USE 1 tablespoon of the remaining oil to brush 1 side of each tortilla. Place 4 tortillas oiled-side down and top evenly with the poblano mixture and cheese. Cover with the remaining tortillas, oiled-side up.

HEAT a skillet over medium-high. Cook the quesadillas in batches, until the tortillas are golden brown and crispy and the cheese is melted, 1 to 2 minutes per side.

COMBINE the radishes, lime juice, salt, and the remaining 1½ teaspoons of oil in a bowl. Cut the quesadillas into wedges and sprinkle with the dressed radishes, avocado, and cilantro.

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- [x] Quick Cooking
- [ ] Healthy Pick
- [ ] Freezable
- [ ] Make Ahead
- [ ] Big Batch
- [ ] Slow Cooker
- [ ] One Pot
- [ ] Whole-Grain
- [ ] Vegetarian
- [ ] Gluten-Free
- [x] Family-Friendly

EASY DINNER

5

Linguine with garlic, soppressata, and wilted arugula

ACTIVE TIME **20 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **20 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

- 12 oz. linguine, uncooked
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 oz. thinly sliced soppressata (Italian salami), torn into bite-size pieces
- 5 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- ¼ tsp. crushed red pepper
- ¼ cup sour cream
- 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice (from 1 lemon)
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 5 oz. arugula (10 loosely packed cups)

COOK the pasta according to the package directions, reserving ½ cup of the cooking water.

MEANWHILE, heat the oil in a large skillet over medium. Add the soppressata and cook, stirring occasionally, until crisp, 5 minutes; remove with a slotted spoon to a paper towel–lined plate. Reduce heat to medium-low. Add the garlic and red pepper; cook, stirring occasionally, until the garlic is soft, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in the sour cream, lemon juice, black pepper, ⅓ cup of the reserved cooking water, and the salt. Add the pasta and toss to combine.

TRANSFER the pasta to a large bowl; add the arugula. Toss until the arugula wilts, adding more cooking water as needed. Top with the soppressata.

NUTRITION
Get details on fat, calories, and sodium at realsimple.com/rsrecipes.

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Things Cooks Know

Simplifying strategies, techniques, and tips—from the *Real Simple* test kitchen to yours

The trick to unmolding ice pops

Getting them out in one piece starts with how you fill the molds. Leave ¼ inch of empty space at the top to give the mixture room to expand as it freezes. (Otherwise the excess will seep out and glue the cover to the mold.) When it's time to unmold, dip the frozen molds in a basin of hot water for no more than 5 seconds to loosen the pops, then gently wiggle them out. Bonus presentation points: Lay the pops on a baking sheet and refreeze for 30 minutes to firm up the edges.

BOOZY POPS
Go to realsimple.com/boozyicepops for five adult recipes.

THREE SURE-FIRE TIPS FOR DRESSING A SALAD

Not too little, not too much.

STEP 1 Dry the greens thoroughly with a salad spinner, or pat dry them with paper towels. An oil-based dressing can't coat wet leaves evenly.

STEP 2 First dress the bowl: Drizzle the dressing around the wall of a mixing bowl, creating one big, circular shape.

STEP 3 Right before you're ready to serve, place the greens in the mixing bowl and gently toss. The greens will pick up just enough dressing from the wall. Lift the salad from the mixing bowl into the serving bowl. Any extra dressing will be left behind.

EXTRA CREDIT
Serve salad on chilled plates. If you have time, pop the plates in the refrigerator for about 5 minutes before eating; the cool surface keeps a salad perky longer.

A NEW METHOD FOR CHILLING BEER

A thick, frosted glass will insulate a beer better than its own bottle or can. But an extremely frosted glass can also quickly chill a not-so-cold (or even room-temperature) beer. Here's how to make one: Wet the glass inside and out and place it upright—dripping wet—into the freezer for 1 hour. Then pour a beer, sit back, and chill.

Written by Heath Goldman
Illustrations by Melinda Josie

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CANNED BEER

From the old classics to the new crafts, great things are brewing this summer. Grab your koozies.

REAL SIMPLE ROAD TEST

1 BEST PILSNER
Sixpoint The Crisp
The epitome of a refreshing beer: bright, floral, and, yes, crisp (meaning flavorful but not heavy). It pours with a small head and has a hint of lemongrass.
TO BUY: $10.50 for six 12-ounce cans.

2 BEST WHEAT
Blue Moon Belgian White
Here's a champ that has everything we want in a wheat beer: creamy, tangy, and citrusy, with a bit of spice (from coriander).
TO BUY: $9 for six 12-ounce cans.

3 BEST AMERICAN PALE ALE
Firestone Walker Pale 31
Ales are fermented differently than lagers, making them fruitier. This light golden beer is mild yet interesting, with floral hops and toasted malt flavors.
TO BUY: $10 for six 12-ounce cans.

Written by Heath Goldman
Photograph by Danny Kim

4 BEST LIGHT
Heineken Light
Most options in this category were flavorless, but this 99-calorie pick tasted like citrus and toasted almonds.
TO BUY: $14 for twelve 12-ounce cans.

5 BEST STOUT
Samuel Adams Nitro Coffee Stout
This Frappuccino-like winner is hard not to like, even if stouts aren't your thing. Nitrogen bubbles (less prickly than CO_2 bubbles) make it ultra-creamy.
TO BUY: $9 for four 15-ounce cans.

6 BEST IPA
Southern Tier 2XIPA
With two times the hops of normal IPAs, it's intense—but not overwhelming. You still get a sweet, pineapple flavor.
TO BUY: $10 for four 16-ounce cans.

7 BEST LAGER
Pabst Blue Ribbon
Full-bodied, fizzy, and pleasantly bitter, this classic trumped its flat, metallic-tasting competitors.
TO BUY: $13.70 for twelve 12-ounce cans.

WHERE TO BUY
All of these beers are sold nationwide. Check the brewers' websites for the closest store near you.

PROP STYLING BY WENDY SCHELAH FOR HALLEY RESOURCES INC.

PROVING THEIR METAL

Julia Herz, the publisher of CraftBeer.com and the craft-beer program director for the Brewers Association, on why cans are so canny.

WHAT MAKES CANNED BEER SO GREAT?
Think of beer cans like small kegs. They're sealed, and they don't expose the beer to light. When beer in the glass or bottle is exposed to light, the flavor can be altered. A chemical reaction occurs between the hops and sunlight, causing the beer to smell and taste like sulfur. Some also say that cans chill more quickly than glass bottles do.

SHOULD YOU POUR IT INTO A GLASS?
If it's possible, drinking a beer out of a glass allows you to better enjoy all the aromatics, because beer glasses have a wider opening than cans. You also consume less carbonation, since it escapes out of the glass more easily. This keeps you from feeling too full too quickly.

WHAT'S THE PROPER WAY TO POUR?
Lift a clean glass up and tilt it to a 45-degree angle. Pour the beer so that it runs down the side of the glass, until the can is three-fourths empty. Now turn the glass so that it's upright, then empty the can into the middle for a perfect one-inch collar of foam.

STORAGE TIP
Herz recommends storing all beer cold. This helps keep it fresher longer. If you don't have enough room in your refrigerator, keep unopened cans in the pantry or the basement (whichever is cooler). The U.S. Department of Agriculture says beer keeps for up to nine months.

The perfect summertime snack.

HOMEMADE HONEY-SRIRACHA CHEX™ MIX

- 3 c. Corn Chex™ cereal
- 3 c. Rice Chex™ cereal
- 1 c. roasted salted peanuts
- 1 c. waffle pretzels
- 2 tbsp. butter
- 3 tbsp. sriracha
- 2 tbsp. honey
- 3 c. popped popcorn

In large microwavable bowl, mix cereals, peanuts and pretzels; set aside.

In small microwavable bowl, microwave butter uncovered on High about 20 seconds or until melted. Stir in sriracha sauce and honey. Pour over cereal mixture; stir until evenly coated.

Microwave uncovered on High 5 to 6 minutes, thoroughly stirring every 2 minutes. Spread on waxed paper to cool, about 15 minutes. Place in serving bowl; stir in popcorn. Store in airtight container.

Chex

FOR MORE RECIPES GO TO CHEX.COM

PLUOTS

Plu-*whats?* These hybrid stone fruits combine the juicy flesh of a plum with the sweetness of an apricot. They ripen quickly and are rarely mealy. And, like plums, they don't easily bruise. In other words: *Yes!* Eat them out of hand, or try them in one of the recipes here. May we recommend the pluot-of-this-world Monte Cristo?

Give it a squeeze

That's the best way to tell if a pluot is ripe. The fruit should give but never feel soft (just like a ripe tomato). Alternatively, you can ripen pluots at room temperature in a single layer, stem-side down. Once they're ripe, store them in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

Pluot or plumcot?

Yes, they both exist. And, no, they are not the same thing. Technically, plumcots are a 50-50 cross between a plum and an apricot, while pluots are mostly plum. In the supermarket, pluots are sometimes labeled plumcots and vice versa. Both are sweet and firm, and you can use them—or other stone fruits—interchangeably in recipes.

Recipes by
Paige Grandjean

Written by
Heath Goldman

Photographs by
Greg DuPree

Food Styling by
Chelsea Zimmer

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1

Pluot and beet salad

Bring 6 cups water and 3 medium **GOLDEN BEETS** to a boil in a saucepan over medium-high; cook until fork-tender, 20 to 25 minutes. Drain and cool 5 minutes; peel and cut into wedges. Toss together the beets, 2 sliced **PLUOTS,** ¼ cup torn **FRESH BASIL,** and 1 Tbsp. **OLIVE OIL.** Top with 2 oz. crumbled **GOAT CHEESE,** 2 Tbsp. chopped **TOASTED ALMONDS,** and ¼ tsp. flaky **SEA SALT** (such as Maldon). SERVES **4**

2

Pluot-cherry float

Combine 2 cups chopped **PLUOTS** and ⅓ cup each **CHERRIES** and **GRANULATED SUGAR** in a saucepan over medium. Cook, stirring and mashing occasionally, until soft and juicy, about 10 minutes. Cool completely, about 1 hour. Pour the mixture through a wire mesh strainer; reserve the syrup. Pour ½ cup **SELTZER** and ¼ cup of the pluot syrup into each of 2 glasses. Scoop ½ cup **VANILLA ICE CREAM** into each glass. SERVES **2**

3

Pluot-and-cheese skewers

Whisk together ¼ cup **OLIVE OIL,** 1 tsp. chopped **FRESH THYME,** and ¼ tsp. each chopped **GARLIC** and **KOSHER SALT.** Toss the marinade with 2 sliced **PLUOTS** and 8 oz. cubed **HALLOUMI OR FETA CHEESE;** chill 1 hour. Thread the pluots and cheese alternately on 8 (8-inch) skewers; reserve the marinade. Grill over medium-high until charred, 2 minutes per side. Serve, drizzled with the reserved marinade and **LEMON JUICE** (optional). SERVES **4**

FOOD

4

Grilled pluots with white chocolate cream

Combine ¼ tsp. **GROUND CARDAMOM** and 2 Tbsp. each melted **BUTTER** and **BROWN SUGAR.** Brush the mixture on 8 **PLUOT** halves and grill, covered, over medium-high, 2 minutes per side. Stir 1 oz. melted **WHITE CHOCOLATE** into 2 Tbsp. **HEAVY CREAM.** Beat ¾ cup heavy cream to soft peaks. Add the white chocolate mixture and 1 tsp. **VANILLA** and beat to soft peaks. Serve with the pluots. SERVES **4**

5

Pluot and cucumber tabbouleh

Stir together 2 cups cooked **BULGUR,** 1 cup chopped **PLUOTS,** 1 cup chopped **ENGLISH CUCUMBER,** ½ cup chopped **FRESH MINT,** ½ cup chopped **FRESH FLAT-LEAF PARSLEY,** ¼ cup **FRESH LEMON JUICE,** 2 Tbsp. **EXTRA-VIRGIN OLIVE OIL,** and 1 tsp. **KOSHER SALT.** SERVES **4**

6

Pluot Monte Cristo

Spread 1 tsp. **DIJON MUSTARD** on 1 side of 8 slices **SOURDOUGH BREAD.** Top each of 4 of the bread slices with 1 slice **SWISS CHEESE,** 2 oz. thinly sliced **TURKEY,** and ½ sliced **PLUOT,** then top with the remaining bread slices. Whisk together 1 cup **WHOLE MILK** and 2 **LARGE EGGS.** Dip the sandwiches in the milk-egg mixture and cook, in batches, in melted butter, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Sprinkle with **CONFECTIONERS' SUGAR** (optional). SERVES **4**

PROP STYLING BY CLAIRE SPOLLEN

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SIMPLY BETTER MORNINGS

Mornings in any household can be hectic and stressful. Here are four simple tips that will help bring ease to your morning routine.

1

PREP TIME

Plan outfits, make lunches and get the book bag ready the night before.

2

THE EARLY BIRD...

Steal a few minutes before everyone else wakes up – read your favorite blog, workout or just enjoy a cup of coffee.

3

READY. SET. GO.

Be efficient. Make sure everyone is dressed before heading to the breakfast table.

4

B'FAST TIME

Plan a no-cook high-energy breakfast on weekdays.

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let in the goodness

Potato, egg, and avocado hash

AVOCA-
DON'T
Avoid letting the avocado pieces touch the hot pan directly. (They'll turn brown.)

Hold the toast this A.M. Instead, use your avocados to top this one-skillet vegetarian crowd-pleaser.

ACTIVE TIME **25 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **25 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

- ¾ lb. new potatoes, cut into ½-inch pieces
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 small red peppers (such as Fresno), thinly sliced
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 1 bunch scallions, thinly sliced
- 4 eggs
- 2 ripe avocados, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. fresh lime juice
- ½ cup chopped fresh cilantro

BOIL the potatoes in salted water in a large, heavy skillet over high until fork-tender, about 6 minutes. Drain; reserve the potatoes.

HEAT the oil in the skillet over medium. Add the potatoes, red peppers, salt, and black pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the potatoes are golden, 5 minutes. Stir in the scallions.

MAKE 4 wells in the mixture with the back of a wooden spoon. Carefully slide 1 egg into each. Reduce heat to medium-low. Cover the pan and cook until the whites are just set, 6 minutes.

TOP with the avocados, lime juice, and cilantro.

Recipe by Heath Goldman
Photograph by Jen Causey
Food Styling by Kellie Gerber Kelley

PROP STYLING BY CLAIRE SPOLLEN

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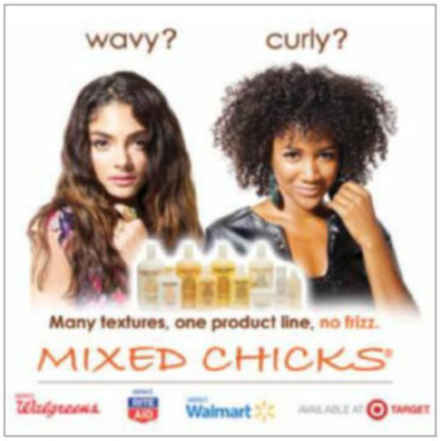

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A Life in Full

MAYBE YOU CAN'T IDENTIFY WITH HER FONDNESS FOR EARLY MORNINGS. BUT THIS SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR'S OUTLOOK CAN TEACH BUSY WOMEN A FEW THINGS.

MELINDA TSAPATSARIS, 40

- Assistant head of school at the Wildwood School, in Los Angeles
- Married to Andy Powell, with three children, Dot, 6; Theo, 4; and Ephy, 1½
- Los Angeles

HIGHER POWER
"Prayer is an important way I start the day to say thank you, set intentions, and express any worries."

6:30 A.M. "I'm up by 5 A.M. I freakishly love mornings. I'm at my best and brightest, and it's when I like to play with the kids. It grounds us before we head out and go our separate ways."

10:15 A.M. "Between the students' classes, I chat with Nnenna, a fifth grader, about our upcoming GardenPalooza event. She's full of ideas and excited to make it our best one yet."

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK
"I'm either alone on my laptop, involved in committee meetings, or in the classroom."

MELINDA'S THOUGHTS ON LIFE BALANCE (OR LACK THEREOF)

No. 1
"I've stopped buying into the trap that everyone has it more together than I do."

No. 2
"Someone once told me, 'The healthiest families are a third of the time in harmony, a third of the time in conflict, and a third of the time in repair.' That felt real to me."

No. 3
"On a day-to-day basis, work-life balance will always be lopsided. I'd rather look back on a year and say, 'That felt balanced.' It's a more forgiving perspective."

11:05 A.M. "Once a week, I meet with Landis Green, the head of the school. We discuss a lot of big-picture ideas, as well as how best to handle the day-to-day type of problem-solving."

1:45 P.M. "Part of my job is classroom observations, like with this 11th-grade music class. Sometimes I feel compelled to join in. Never mind that I can play only three chords on the guitar."

4:20 P.M. "After work, I do a yoga class with Jay Co at Yogaraj. When I was pregnant with Dot, I went six times a week. Once I had kids, I stopped. My goal is to go one to three times a week."

6:05 P.M. "Theo's preschool friends and their mom, Sabrina, come over for dinner. Her husband is traveling for work, so I said, 'Come over—joint chaos is better than solitary chaos.'"

Photographs by Pascal Shirley

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BLUEBERRY HONEY OVERNIGHT OATS

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup Quaker® oats
- 1/2 cup low fat milk
- 1/4 cup Greek yogurt
- 1/2 cup blueberries
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tbsp honey

PREPARATION

Combine Quaker® oats and milk in your container of choice. Top with blueberries, Greek yogurt, vanilla extract, and honey. Refrigerate overnight. Yum!

PEANUT BUTTER BANANA OVERNIGHT OATS

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup Quaker® oats
- 1/2 cup low fat milk
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 cup bananas, sliced
- 2 tbsp creamy peanut butter
- 1 tsp honey
- 1 tsp chia seeds (optional)

PREPARATION

Add Quaker® oats to your container of choice, pour in milk, and layer bananas, chia seeds, peanut butter, and vanilla. Sprinkle with cinnamon and drizzle honey, place in the refrigerator, and enjoy in the morning.

VERY BERRY OVERNIGHT OATS

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup Quaker® oats
- 1/2 cup low fat milk
- 1/4 cup vanilla Greek yogurt
- 1 tsp chia seeds
- 1 cup mixed berries

PREPARATION

Combine Quaker® oats and milk in your container of choice. Add vanilla Greek yogurt, chia seeds, and mixed berries before refrigerating overnight. Rise, stir, and enjoy!

ONLINE-FURNITURE CONSIGNMENT: A CHEAT SHEET

CHAIRISH.COM

GOOD FOR: High-style furnishings of all types, from all eras.

BUYING TIP: When you're ready to buy, click the Make an Offer button to try to get a lower price. Shoot for 10 percent off the sell price.

SELLING TIP: To help you determine what something is worth, refer to the Chairish Pink Book, which serves as your go-to for online pricing.

KRRB.COM

GOOD FOR: Vintage, secondhand, and handmade wares in your neighborhood.

BUYING TIP: Look for an uptick in great deals at the beginning and the end of each month, when people are moving and more desperate to unload.

SELLING TIP: If you're already selling an item on Etsy or eBay, add a Krrb It button to your bookmarks bar to automatically create a Krrb listing as well.

ETSY.COM

GOOD FOR: One-of-a-kind goods from around the world that are handmade or vintage.

BUYING TIP: Use the Favorites tool to keep track of what you love and organize it by category.

SELLING TIP: Use the site's shipping services to purchase and print out post-office and FedEx shipping labels at home, with savings of up to 30 percent.

CRAIGSLIST.COM

GOOD FOR: Everything and the kitchen sink.

BUYING TIP: When browsing, use alternate search terms. In Craigslist world, a couch is a sofa is a love seat. Also be sure to include misspellings.

SELLING TIP: You can repost every 48 hours. Also, because as a seller you're meeting strangers, it's best to have a friend with you during transactions.

APTDECO.COM

GOOD FOR: Antique and midcentury furniture, plus secondhand modern pieces from retail stores.

BUYING TIP: Negotiating isn't encouraged; sellers are advised on fair-market pricing. But you can message the seller to see if there's wiggle room.

SELLING TIP: If the AptDeco shipping service is used (from $35 for a small piece, like an ottoman or a side table), the buyer picks up the tab.

What you need to paint anything

This checklist will keep you covered.

THE BRUSHES

angled sash

Most pros prefer a 2½- to 3-inch angled sash brush for painting trim and "cutting in." For small spots and maneuvering into the corners of furniture, a two-inch brush with a short, stubby handle works best. Choose a synthetic-bristle brush for latex paint; natural bristles absorb water and become floppy.

flat

For doors, cabinets, and paneling—or anything flat and wide—pick a four- to five-inch flat brush. With long, straight bristles, it easily covers a wide swath at once.

roller

For walls, floors, and ceilings, choose an eight- or nine-inch roller, which will cover the area quickly but won't be so heavy that it tires your arm. Rolling trim or the stiles of a door? Go with a mini roller, usually about four inches wide. Choose a synthetic roller cover for latex paint; natural materials absorb water and swell.

THE BASICS

drop cloths

Plastic ones are disposable, but they can be slippery and need to be taped down. Canvas drop cloths are about three times more expensive but also reusable. Some pros use both—layering canvas drop cloths over plastic for foolproof protection, plus a nonslip surface. You can get the same effect for less with taped-down garbage bags and sheets of newspaper.

tape

Use regular masking tape to secure plastic drop cloths, but stick with high-quality blue painter's tape for creating sharp lines around trim.

paper towels and rags

Heavy-duty paper towels (like Viva) make quick work of drips and drops. (This may seem obvious, but you'll probably go through a roll.) Rags for wiping up sanding dust are a must.

latex or rubber gloves

Protect your hands from rough sandpaper and the inevitable paint splatters.

mask

Keep dust out of your mouth and nose when you're doing any heavy-duty sanding.

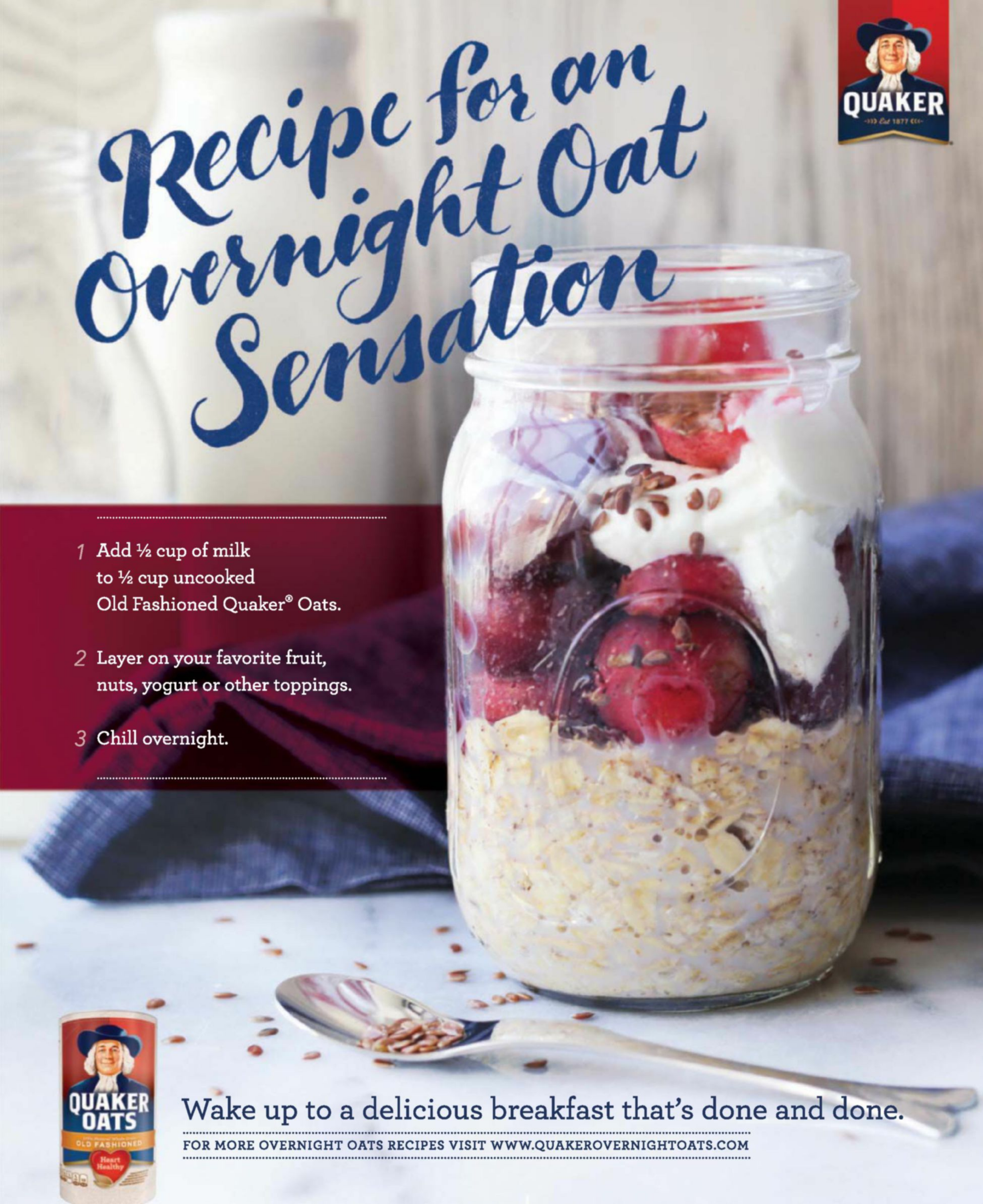
screwdriver

You may need one to remove hardware or electrical plates. It can clean out a crack or a gouge before filling or caulking and can also take off a paint-can lid.

HANDY HELPERS

- ADJUSTABLE EXTENSION POLE
- SANDING BLOCK
- FOAM EDGER
- CAULK
- 5-IN-1 TOOL
- PLASTIC BUCKET

ILLUSTRATION BY TOBY NEILAN


QUAKER
Recipe for an Overnight Oat Sensation
1 Add ½ cup of milk to ½ cup uncooked Old Fashioned Quaker® Oats.
2 Layer on your favorite fruit, nuts, yogurt or other toppings.
3 Chill overnight.
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